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January 1982

BY IN THE INFANTRY BY PAUL FUSSELL

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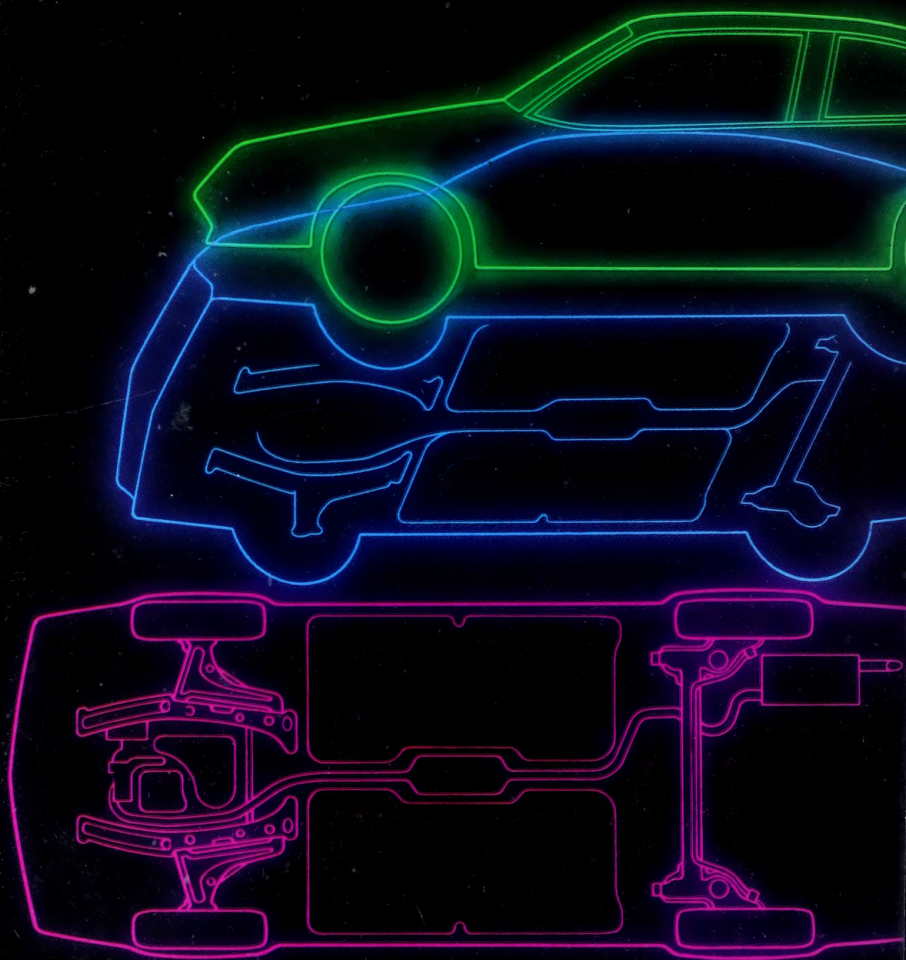
Harper's

MIAMI DOES BUSINESS
DRUGS AND TERRORISM IN AMERICA'S CASABLANCA



WINGAME V

4 1982



Technology for the side of the car you don't see.

It isn't brightly painted. It isn't pretty. The other side of the metal. You rarely see it. Yet it's a very important part of a car's body. It's where moisture can collect and cause rust. It's also where we've invested a lot of money and technology.

These surfaces, such as the inside of the doors and fenders, the trunk floor, and the rear quarter panels, aren't treated the way they used to be. We're treating them in an entirely different way. Many are now made from zinc-coated steel, while others are coated with a special corrosion-resistant substance developed from a petroleum-based compound. And a new plastisol spray protects the car on the lower side areas closest to the ground, where pebbles and stones can cause the most paint damage.

This isn't flashy technology. In fact, its only purpose is to help prevent rust.

That's our idea of how to use technology to build cars and trucks. Attention to details where you don't see them, as well as where you do. Appearance and comfort may sometimes sell a car, but today's customers demand real value.

Our goal, as the world's largest automotive manufacturer, is to maintain our lead by using new technology to build cars and trucks that perform better and last longer, with lower maintenance costs, than those built by any competitor—American or foreign.

General Motors

The future of transportation is here.



Urban Ideas from Abroad

With their budgets pinched, local communities across the country are straining to provide public services and solve urban problems. More and more, they're picking up pointers from abroad. They are adopting and adapting ideas and innovations from other lands.

Take such humdrum hardware as manhole covers, those clunky, clanging iron discs that dot city streets. Sweden developed adjustable manhole covers that can be raised or lowered four inches. They're now in use in U.S. cities. Adjustability means the covers can be kept flush with the pavement as new surfacing is added or settling takes place.

Movable swimming pool floors have come across the Atlantic from West Germany to find their way to at least 10 U.S. cities. At the push of a button, hydraulic rams raise the floor to create a pool for the handicapped or for tots, or to form a recreational floor for table games and exercise.

A municipal parking lot in Dayton, Ohio, blooms with grass, in a novel wrinkle imported from European cities. The experimental lot is paved with perforated building blocks. Grass grows out the openings. Besides being more attractive than blacktop, the lot absorbs water runoff and helps cool the downtown in summer.

From Finland comes a safety device for bicycle riders that's been adopted in Charlottesville, Virginia. It's a simple enough gimerack: a 20-inch shaft extending out horizontally from the bike's left-hand side. At the tip is a reflector. Cars give a broad berth to bikes equipped with the safety spacer.

These ideas and hundreds more are being spread around North America by a non-profit outfit in Washington known as

the Council for International Urban Liaison. It's backed by such organizations as the National League of Cities, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and National Association of Counties. Through its newsletters, public officials are peppered with all sorts of notions, gleaned from abroad, to cut costs and make cities more livable.

In France, school buses carry regular riders when the drivers have finished their school runs. London police deploy a portable crane that lifts an illegally parked or disabled car and clears a parking spot in less than three minutes, even from a row of tightly parked vehicles.

In Japan, local governments are readying a system to read electric, gas, and water meters electronically. The Israeli city of Tel Aviv sells parking coupons to motorists. A parker tears off a coupon, punches special tabs to indicate the date and arrival time, and leaves the coupon in the car window.

Municipal officials welcome the flow of urban know-how from other countries, because they're generally super-sensitive about going abroad on fact-finding trips for fear of being cudgeled by taxpayers as "junketeers." Still, the council does sponsor trips overseas for officials willing to take the heat from taxpayers. Indianapolis, Alexandria, and Pittsburgh are developing waterfront districts with amenities and features found on a council-sponsored tour of European cities.

Other countries have hundreds of years more experience in urban living than we have in America. It stands to reason that our municipal officeholders and planners can learn a lot from their counterparts abroad. And they are, thanks to an organization spearheading the transfer of urban innovation.



**UNITED
TECHNOLOGIES**

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LETTERS

How crucial a crisis is

William Tucker's article "The Energy Crisis Is Over" [Harper's, November] reminds me of the saying "The operation was successful, but the patient died." He chortles gleefully over the fact that it is the decontrol of oil prices that has "ended OPEC's dominance of the market." And, with unabashed chutzpah, he says further that "all we have to do now is decontrol our natural-gas prices, and we will be home free."

Free of what? Free of higher prices initiated by greedy domestic oil and gas producers? Free to use alternative energy sources like solar energy or methanol instead of gasoline? Free to remonstrate with the public utilities and their back-pocket public-service commissions whenever they subscribe a new increase?

It is not fair to chide the liberals and consumers for opposing decontrol of prices, just as it isn't fair to salute the oil interests and gas barons for being farsighted. We know that while we may be beating back OPEC, it is primarily the consumers of America who are responsible for helping to solve a sticky problem. But at what cost? Many of us cannot afford the leisure of an afternoon Sunday drive because the price of gasoline is still too high. Many of us are not as comfortable as we would like to be at home because the price of heating oil is way out of sight.

Decontrol! he says. Let the oilmen and gasmen use their technology to discover new wells, new sources of energy! That's the bunk! What are the oil and gas interests doing with their newfound wealth? They are diversifying, not digging. The only ones to gain from decontrol of oil and gas prices will be the people

who own the oil and gas resources. It's as simple as that.

HAROLD SWANS
Bronx, N.Y.

William Tucker's "The Energy Crisis Is Over" is the best synopsis I have ever read of how we got ourselves into thrall to OPEC, the title and some elements of the article may lull people into a continued false sense of security, a condition at which Americans excel. We never had an energy crisis, except perhaps during brief periods of long lines at service stations. But we have had a serious energy problem for least ten years, and recent oil "spikes" and flattening of prices are only temporary aberrations.

The current hard facts: last month we imported oil and oil products at a rate of more than five million barrels a day. This was down a million from a year earlier, but that's meaningless consolation. The average price of imported oil was \$33.60 a barrel, which translates into \$62 billion a year. This wipes out all our positive balance of trade in agricultural and industrial goods and leaves us more than \$40 billion in the hole.

We pretend that we can afford this. But the poor countries of the world know better. The price of oil is quite literally killing them. Our international political result is a clamor by all the starving members of the U.N. for the United States to share its wealth with them. That OPEC's price, which is almost eighteen times what it was ten years ago in nominal dollars, and more than seven times as great in constant dollars (that's 700 percent), has turned the U.N. into a battleground between haves and have-nots, and even the haves are hurting.

ROBERT H. PASCHER
Sacramento, Calif.

I greatly enjoyed William Tucker's article on the energy crisis. He has made forcefully the point that a few economists and others have been trying to make: the oil crisis is largely our own doing.

HUGH MACAULAY

Alumni Professor of Economics
Clemson University
Clemson, S.C.

Your misguided emphasis on William Tucker's lucid but oversimplified article is irresponsible and threatens our future. We still have an energy crisis, and we need strong, intelligent leadership from both government and industry, including reasonable operation of the marketplace, if we are to escape disaster.

The energy crisis is a worldwide problem brought about by overdependence on finite oil as the prime energy source. Even with all the acceleration of exploration and drilling, we are going to be hard put during the next decade just to keep even with the present domestic production. The maldistribution of energy resources will keep the world in state of crisis for decades to come. The conclusion of a four-year study by the International Commission on Energy Conservation of the World Energy Conference, the most actual and complete analysis of the world's energy resources and needs to date, was that the need for oil worldwide will exceed the physical capability to provide it in about ten to fifteen years. There are many uncertainties, of course, but this is the combined judgment of the world's best experienced and knowledgeable people in the energy field.

Coal and nuclear power are the only sources of energy that are capable of filling the widening gap between oil supply and demand. Both these, with their high capital costs, long development time, and regulatory obstacles, are now in a shambles. Other energy sources, such as passive solar, biomass, and geothermal, can help, but their overall effect will be minimal.

The prime cause of our present oil glut" and the "collapse" of oil prices to \$34 per barrel (fifteen times the price of a decade ago) is the in-

creased production of Saudi Arabia. That the industrial free world depends on the volatile Persian Gulf area for 40 percent of its oil is enough to give everyone nightmares.

ELLIS L. ARMSTRONG

Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy Targets
Salt Lake City, Utah

WILLIAM TUCKER REPLIES:

I will have to agree a little with those writers who found the title of the piece oversimplified. I hope that people do not relax and start over-consuming again. But the point of the article, once more, is that as long as prices are free to respond to supply and demand, people won't over-consume.

The energy crisis is over in the sense that I do not believe we will ever again experience any "energy shortages," as we did in the Seventies. The 1977 natural-gas shortages and the 1979 gasoline "crisis" were purely artificial shortages created by price controls; the 1979 shortage was particularly absurd, because price controls forced us to substitute foreign oil for domestic oil, and placed us at the mercy of foreign events.

We do have an energy problem, in the sense that all resources are inherently scarce, but we do not have a problem in the sense that we have to devise a policy to deal with it. The "problem" of the 1970s was that America's political leadership assumed that people were unwilling to deal with realistic market prices. The solution has been the discovery that they are not. Mr. Swanson expresses this choice perfectly. He suggests that he would still rather live with the illusion of cheap energy, rather than face reality and start doing something about it. Fortunately, his position seems to be becoming the minority one nationwide.

One other point should be clarified. Many people spoke of the "finitude" of resources and suggested that by continuing to burn oil and gas today we are only robbing the future, making things worse for our grandchildren, and hastening the day of some far worse energy catastrophe. This is not really true. Many analyses have shown that as long as

we do not try to manipulate the market, the ordinary workings of supply and demand can handle these transitions. (The most famous work along these lines is Barnett and Morse's *Scarcity and Growth*, written for Resources for the Future in 1965.) There is no sense in keeping oil in the ground today as long as it can be used economically. It is better to use today's oil to build a more efficient society that will be able to use other resources and function on less energy tomorrow.

As long as we let the market tell us what is most efficient to do, we are going to remain on course. Decontrolling natural-gas prices and opening up nuclear power to the tests of the marketplace would leave us with no energy problems to worry about. It would simply leave the entire public with the right incentives for designing and building technologies that work. Really, our problems are much less difficult than most people tend to think.

Basic training

Andrew Hacker makes some good points in "The Shame of Professional Schools" (*Harper's*, October), but he is about ten years late. His observations about undergraduate medical education are correct and cogent for the late Sixties, but the dust has nearly settled on the primary health care-family practice issues. The conclusion is (or was) that the postwar preoccupation with molecular medicine slighted the application of established technology to human suffering. Whose fault this misapplication of science was is moot. In the last ten years an increasing number of students have selected primary-health-care specialties (60 percent of some graduating medical-school classes) and the family-practice movement has burgeoned to phenomenal proportions. Currently there are some 430 family-practice training programs (almost all university affiliated) and several thousand doctors engaged in three years of postdoctoral education. The training is aimed at giving them specific skills to deal with everyday medical

LETTERS

problems and complaints. Therefore, to say "American medical schools have made science and research their principal priorities" is simply not an accurate description of the art form of most schools.

Not mentioned in the article is the fact that virtually all M.D. graduates enter a postdoctoral residency training program after medical school. Such training lasts from three to five years. It is really during these years that the young physician finally hones his or her basic skills and translates them into people-treating realities.

A medical-school teacher of mine said that physicians should be educated, not trained. Today's applied skills will be tomorrow's outdated concepts, but for young doctors to understand and evaluate tomorrow's applied skills they need solid knowledge of physiology, chemistry, epidemiology, and biomathematical concepts if they are to be educated rather than trained. I am amazed at the basic care concepts that have evolved in the sixteen years since I graduated from medical school.

ROBERT R. THOMPSON, M.D.
Zumbrota, Minn.

Andrew Hacker's acerbic commentary is very funny, but full of three-quarter truths and not particularly new. Even twenty years ago, when I was a grad student at Carnegie Tech, one heard the gibe "You can always tell a Harvard M.B.A., but you can't tell him much," and the line that our own college needed courses in Humility I and Humility II. Excessive self-confidence can hurt an M.B.A.'s career if it is perceived as arrogance, and it's a little hard to train students to be just arrogant enough.

Our aim at the business schools is threefold: to give students a wide knowledge of all the areas of business—such as marketing, production, finance, and labor relations; to give them enough specialized training for an entry-level job in one of various fields; and to give them a chance to "play top executive" in case studies and computer games.

Companies vary enormously in their hiring practices for "junior management" jobs. A lot of them are quite happy to hire undergrad-

uate business-degree holders. Some of them welcome liberal-arts graduates, some prefer to promote from the ranks. Some think the ideal candidate is a guy who joined their firm in a blue-collar job and then got his business degree the slow way, at night, while others will pay top dollar for a candidate with an engineering degree topped by an M.B.A. Some businessmen prefer to hire their nephews.

Some of Hacker's criticisms are justified, but the business schools are certainly meeting the tests of the marketplace. Business students keep enrolling and getting hired, while the poor political-science graduates find they have to sneak over to our side of the campus to take courses in accounting and personnel if they are to stand a chance at the placement office.

GLENN T. WILSON
Southern Illinois University
Edwardsville, Ill.

Thank you for Andrew Hacker's "The Shame of Professional Schools." Having recently finished a two-year program at a well-known business school, I've spent a lot of time trying to figure out why. Before I put in my two years, I found a respectable job and worked my way up to a moderately responsible position. Now that I have an M.B.A., my job is nearly identical, yet I earn about \$12,000 more a year.

My guess is that in areas where free-market competition is weakest, professional degrees and certification are most important. Because of licensing, neither legal nor medical careers are sufficiently open to interested entrants. Education in these fields becomes a rationalization for the restrictions on entry, aimed at keeping doctors' and lawyers' salaries higher than the market would otherwise dictate.

Business school, like any academic institution, offers an education. Education for education's sake is admirable. Those firms looking to the bottom line would be wise to hire high-school graduates and train them from scratch.

ANONYMOUS
Long Island City, N.Y.

ANDREW HACKER REPLIES:

Professor Wilson is absolutely correct in stating that "business students keep enrolling and getting hired." My article explained why that is happening despite the fact that business schools serve no useful purpose. They simply keep young people on hold until they look old enough for junior-executive desks. And companies recruit from schools like Professor Wilson's because they find that easier than opening the doors to anyone off the street.

All those "family-practice training programs" cited by Dr. Thompson have become necessary because medical schools don't teach physicians their basic job. Even the residency years are spent in hospital settings where the patients they see are a ready on their backs. It is clear that Dr. Thompson enjoyed his assignments in "biomathematical concepts." However, loading medical studies with courses of that sort turn away many people who would make splendid physicians. My analysis is far from out of date: the American Association of Medical Colleges has just asked for more emphasis on "the new biology." Are we so mesmerized by science that we cannot see that overtraining exists?

A man's world

Re Florence King's "The Niceness Factor" [*Harper's*, October] there are other means than homophobia for "escaping the femininity of American life." They include infantry, field artillery, and similar close-combat units of the Army and Marine Corps.

MAJ. ROBERT P. FAIRCHILD
Fort Hood, Tex.

ERRATUM

On page 33 of William Tucker's article "The Energy Crisis Is Over" [*Harper's*, November], James G. Abourezk—not James Abdnor—should have been listed as the senator from South Dakota who favored extending oil price controls in 1975.

WHEELS OF MISFORTUNE

ometimes equality just costs too much

by Roger Starr

IN A television documentary on the problems of the handicapped, a strange vehicle is rolling down the sidewalk. It is a hospital stretcher, the apparatus that normal transports a patient to and from an operating room. But no orderly pushing this stretcher. It seems to be rolling down the sidewalk entirely on its own, impelled by some invisible power. Huddled under the blankets is a somewhat distorted human form. After staring at this apparition on the screen for some seconds, I realize that the stretcher is driven by a battery-powered electric motor, and that the passenger is also a driver, steering himself with the aid of a small mirror suspended from the stand over his face. He controls the wheels with a tiny rudder.

How can anyone praise enough the fort and strength of will that enables someone who might casually be called "hopelessly crippled" to win for himself the mobility and independence of the unaffected? Without detracting in the slightest from the achievement of the man on the stretcher (he actually directed his machine across the street when he reached the ramp at the corner), it could be noted that his victory was not a lonely one. His achievement is made possible not only by his will but also by the development of technology; batteries, motors, and steering systems made his motion possible. And it required not mere heroic will, but large amounts of money. From somewhere beyond his reach had come the resources without which he could not move.

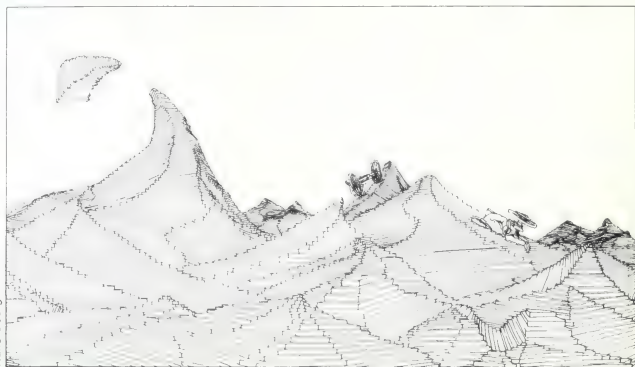
Is it mean-spirited to suggest that the costs of giving the lame the power of movement and the blind the power of sight should be calculated while one celebrates these achievements? A congressional pledge to include the handicapped in the Great Society is mere windbag oratory unless the nation produces and allocates enough wealth to cover the costs entailed. We do not generally rely on saints to accomplish extrabudgetary miracles.

THE generous-spirited balk at these cautionary words. For a majority of Congress, many judges, and large groups of private citizens gathered in organized ranks to fight for the "rights" of disabled citizens, the challenge is strictly moral. It can have only one measure, an ethical one. They believe that the claims of the handicapped derive from the very principles on which the nation was founded. Lead-

ers of the handicapped movement insist that what the handicapped want is not pity, not a charitably motivated helping hand or, above all, a message that their countrymen deem them unhealthy or abnormal. They want their "rights."

One wonders where these rights come from. If they come from the same place as Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness—the hand of the Creator—then they can be secured only by government, as the Declaration of Independence averred. Thus, believers in the "rights" of the handicapped claim that these rights stand on no different ground from that of the rights enumerated in the famous first ten amendments to the Constitution.

But there is a difference, and the difference is material, in both senses of that word. Even a poor country can, without overloading its economy, bind its government never to establish a favored religion or to interfere with freedom of expression,



Hans-Georg Rauch

Roger Starr is a member of the editorial board of The New York Times.

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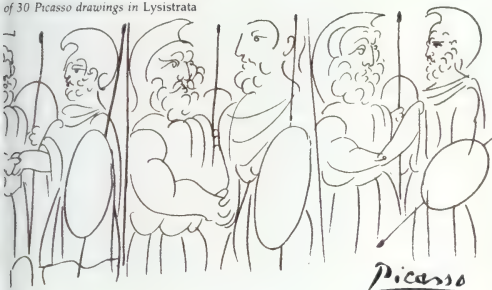
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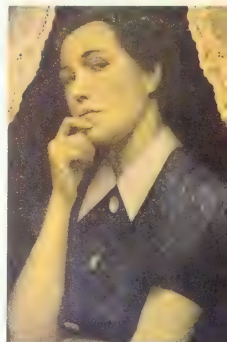
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Grant Wood illustration from *Main Street*

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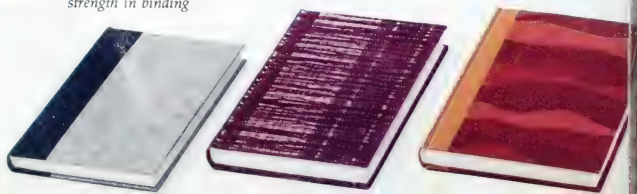
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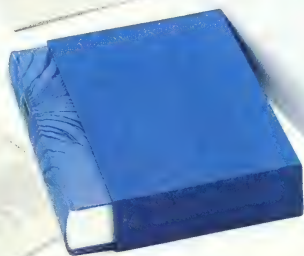
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and the same may be said for the other major constitutional guarantees of freedom. A trial by jury may indeed be more expensive than a trial before a commissioner or judge, but the reckoning could be made in pennies in the infant days of the republic. But guaranteeing mobility to the handicapped entails monstrous costs, and resources are finite even for the richest country in the world.

The inadequacy of the original Bill of Rights as a catalogue of government-guaranteed freedoms was recognized by Franklin Roosevelt in his 1944 State of the Union address. He used that occasion, in an election year, to proclaim what he called "a second Bill of Rights." While the original list set forth how the people were to be protected from acts of the government, Roosevelt promised a postwar activist government that would protect people from the vicissitudes of life in general and of the prewar economy in particular. He announced that everyone would have the right to a job, health protection, a decent home, and other good things—none of which could be promised to anyone unless a sound, busy, and rich economy made them possible.

Nothing said by President Roosevelt established a "right." Legislation was needed to secure what he had promised. Since 1944, Congress and the state legislatures have passed laws that describe many of Roosevelt's visions as "rights," at least in their preambles. Economic provision has even been made for some of them. The right to a job, for instance, was allegedly secured by establishing a Council of Economic Advisers.

Interestingly enough, however, postwar prosperity reserved the center of the political stage for the fight for a different kind of right, much closer in spirit to the original ten amendments. The civil-rights movement was an effort to show that black Americans were being deprived of rights embodied in the Constitution. Its supporters assumed that their revolution involved no economic costs to anyone. Indeed, they believed that as segregation was outlawed, and as blacks joined fully in American life, their effort would improve the economy, not burden it. Similarly, wom-

en's liberation was not conceived of as requiring large-scale appropriations from the government, but merely as the striking down of barriers: simple, when the will is there.

We know now that merely outlawing restrictive practices cannot quickly bring blacks and women as a whole into the American mainstream. Because things went slower than had been hoped, the courts found it was legal to discriminate by race and sex when the purpose was to make the integration process move faster. In addition, it was intended that the Great Society would spend money to make up for the deprivations of the past. The notion of reparations for a resident minority that had been mistreated in the past is a novel one historically, but the dual principle involved—enunciating "rights" and meeting the cost of achieving them retroactively—set a pattern that the handicapped are following.

THE HANDICAPPED were given a congressional mandate that treated them very much like a minority that had been discriminated against and was entitled to special protection. A law spelling out the rights of the handicapped was passed in 1973 under the title of the Rehabilitation Act. The purpose of the act was not to pay for the rehabilitation of physically and mentally handicapped people by putting federal money into medicine. Rather, treating the handicapped as a minority that was discriminated against, it tried to give them the same protections that had been extended to blacks and other ethnic and sexual groups.

The act applied to physically and mentally handicapped people in their relationship with employers and government agencies. Contractors who sell more than \$2,500 in goods or services to the federal government, and local-government agencies that accept a similar minimum amount in grants from Washington, were forbidden to discriminate against a handicapped person unless they could prove that the job could not be done by someone so handicapped, and

that there was no other job available in which the handicap would not matter.

The Rehabilitation Act was not intended to protect only the marginally handicapped; the law asserted that the hard-core victims—those limited to wheelchairs or suffering from serious nervous disabilities—could not be barred from transportation or educational facilities. The burden fell on an employer who refused to hire a handicapped person to prove that the reason was inescapably connected with the requirements of the job. The question of whether physical or mental disability will interfere with the performance of any specific job becomes, in most cases, what the sports announcers describe as "judgment call." With a government agency prepared to come to the aid of the job applicant, the burden of proof tends to shift from a neutral midpoint to the side of the handicapped; at least something of that sort has happened with respect to the other forbidden forms of discrimination.

The eight years since the Rehabilitation Act passed have been surprisingly untroublesome, however. No serious complications have arisen in the fields of employment or higher education. There have been a few lawsuits by individuals claiming to have been discriminated against in schools or employment because of their handicaps. Some have indeed placed extreme financial burdens on educational institutions. A deaf student persuaded one court that the college she attended was obliged to provide a sign-language interpreter for her at its own expense. Undoubtedly, the money the college had received from the federal government had no direct connection whatever with deafness or disability.

This policy could be unbearable in colleges and universities if deaf people generally took advantage of it in unpopular, underattended courses. (Imagine one deaf student demanding a sign-language interpreter for his course in Aramaic, another student the same for his course in Tibetan. If the government were seriously interested in meeting the problems of the handicapped, it would encourage

all deaf students studying foreign languages to enroll at a single institution staffed for this purpose. But it will not, because it is impaled on its own view of constitutional right superseding economic practicability. In part the government has been saved from its folly by the reluctance of handicapped people to embarrass higher education unnecessarily. Similarly, the small number of suits by handicapped workers against employers suggests that the handicapped have had the sense to adapt themselves to reality rather than to force reality to change for them. Their pride at overcoming their handicap makes them conscientious in their work, and especially desirable to their employers.

A MUCH more contentious area has been that of public transportation. Handicapped-movement leaders react with outrage to any suggestion of special transportation for the handicapped could be provided at a much lower cost than that of reconstructing underground or elevated railroad systems. But local-government authorities, already struggling with deficits, aging equipment, and higher fares, have begun to fight back. New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority announced in 1981 that it simply would not submit a program for meeting federal requirements that it convert from what in the legal terminology is called a nonaccessible system (not accessible to wheelchair riders). The MTA estimated that it would cost about \$1.4 billion to finance the total adaptation of the transit system as the law requires. Under the rules, key stations would have to be equipped with elevators, all new buses would have to be provided with lifts for wheelchairs (although not at once), and a special system to interchange buses or vans would be required to carry handicapped people between key stations and their destinations.

The spokesmen for the handicapped denounced the MTA's cost estimates as absurdly overstated and said they would accept a much more

modest plan. But whatever the present leaders of the handicapped say has no binding effect on demands that might be made in the future. The leaders of the handicapped claim that the capital costs of the necessary adaptation of the New York system, spread over thirty years, including maintenance, could be achieved for under \$15 million a year. This figure contrasts so sharply with the Authority's estimate, though, that it is hard to believe that the handicapped movement would be satisfied with any program costing so little when there is so much to be done.

Reading the literature of the handicapped movement, one is reminded of the rhetoric of the 1960s: "As a result of their [sic] arrogant and blatant violation of this federal mandate, the MTA denies not only the human and civil rights of disabled individuals, but threatens the rights of all transit users, since this action could result in the withholding of all federal funds for mass transportation." It would be at least as correct to say that the added costs of complying with the Rehabilitation Act could effectively neutralize the federal grants that help to support the New York transit system, and that it is this law, and not the MTA, that menaces the transportation of all New York City. Another handicapped-movement document suggests that if the federal requirements were met, a quarter of a million disabled New Yorkers would be able to go to work and earn a living. Since the rules are primarily designed for people in wheelchairs, the promise of 250,000 additional passengers is impossible to support by any available figures. In Los Angeles, where buses with lifts are now widely available, the percentage of disabled people who actually use the wheelchair lifts in daily routine is tiny.* The experi-

* A spokesman for Los Angeles RTD says that thirty-two bus lines are now accessible, comprising 328 buses equipped with lifts. By the end of June 1982, 115 bus lines—1,140 buses—will be equipped with lifts costing \$15,000 each. Despite heavy and expensive publicity, the RTD now estimates that of the 250,000–300,000 boardings daily on these thirty-two lines, between three and five people make use of the lifts.

ence of Washington, D.C. is similar.

The Reagan administration is trying to rephrase the transportation regulations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, to reduce the insistence that the only solution to moving the handicapped is to make the public-transportation system accessible to them. A lower federal court has already ruled that "accessibility" may be provided by alternative transport systems. Many people in wheelchairs do not wish or dare to use public transport, yet "accessibility" is the very cornerstone of the philosophy of the handicapped movement. The handicapped do not want special transportation for themselves. Never mind the expense, they want to be part of the mainstream of American life. And the story has not ended with one court decision.

THE SAME desire has led to a drive to apply the Rehabilitation Act's standards of "accessibility" to primary and secondary schools, with as many, if not more, problems the result. The difference is that this drive has been entirely successful: school districts in the nation that accept federal aid (almost all of them) must extend to handicapped children an education that gives them every opportunity to develop to their "fullest potential." The Department of Education also requires that their education be carried on in a school's regular classes whenever possible.

Measured solely by intention, such requirements are beyond reproach. It's in practice that problems arise. Take New York City as an example: during the last six years, the total enrollment of schoolchildren declined by 12.4 percent. The total rise in expenditures between 1974 and 1979 was a mere 5.7 percent. But the total number of handicapped children has more than doubled in the eight years since the Rehabilitation Act was passed, and the Board of Education spends on each of the now more than 80,000 children in Special Education twice what it spends on the "normal" child. Counting in the cost of transporting handicapped children to and from school in special buses or

vans, the Board now spends more on the handicapped than on its entire high-school program. Of this sum—about \$400 million annually—the federal government actually contributes 8 percent; the city and state, mostly the city, pay the rest. Are the results for the handicapped, and the effects of their presence in the “mainstream,” justified by this expense? Could the money be better spent on other educational programs for the benefit of students and society as a whole? No one seems to have asked these questions, nor is it apparent how to answer them.

Money is not the only problem posed for schools across the nation by the Rehabilitation Act. Under federal laws passed in 1975 the states are required to identify all handicapped children, a task that often involves some kind of panel making fine, and debatable, judgments about who is and who is not handicapped. The states are also required to design an education that will allow the handicapped to participate as much as possible in the regular activities of normal children.

This last stipulation is especially troublesome. It is clearly impossible, for example, to equip every school to deal with the special kinds of handicaps from which different students suffer—emotional and physical, major and minor—but if a school district decides to cluster certain types of disabilities in certain schools it must also be able to survive a challenge in court if a parent decides his handicapped child is being transported too far. And even then the transportation problems are immense, and often only expensively solved: New York's school-busing bill—none of it for racial balancing, most of it for transporting special-education students—comes to about \$150 million a year. Large rural school districts have it no easier when handicapped children must be taken to a school not ordinarily served by the school bus that passes their home.

The response of most of the groups interested in special education to the immense load that the 1975 laws have placed on their school districts is to urge the federal government to

absorb the cost of the programs they have required. (The same groups, of course, were instrumental in persuading the federal government to impose the requirements in the first place.) But it seems futile to hope that Washington will pay for any greatly enlarged set of costs, with its current budget billions of dollars out of balance under existing commitments. And even if Washington had the money, it would insist on enough of a local contribution to provide some protection against waste. Inevitably, then, local governments will have to provide part of the cost. Where will they get the money?

They will get the money from the same place that the money for adapting transit systems will come from: other programs, especially those that lack that mandated support of federal statutes, or, where no statutes are in place, from those that have escaped federal court decisions. This means the money can't come from, say, prison budgets, because federal courts have found that the Constitution requires generally better conditions in the state prisons than the state governments are now able to provide. It can come from the funds usually given over to sustaining the amenities of life—repairing roads, or bridges, or sewers—but only so long as federal environmental standards don't suffer violation. And, most important, it can come from other educational programs, although not from programs for ensuring racial and sexual equality.

It is useless to flog a point that is so easily made: in establishing federal standards for the treatment of handicapped children, just as in the case of establishing federal standards for transporting handicapped people of all ages, the national government has put its name on an obligation that it simply cannot meet.

THESE ARE hard words, and unpleasant ones. Surely nothing tears at the conscience more than a sense of public impotence before the task of relieving the hardships of physically or emotionally handicapped children or

adults, especially in the face of claims that their disabilities could be reduced, and their dignity restored, if the public were willing to spend the money. Inescapably, the motivating force of the handicapped movement is rage, just as black rage was alleged to be the motivating force of the civil-rights movement. The rage of the handicapped is understandable, especially that of disabled people who have lost the use of their limbs but whose minds, talents, and education are of a high order, waiting, begging, to be put to use. But rage seldom offers a solution to social problems. No matter how savage it sounds, spending money on the handicapped must be measured against the wealth produced by the nation's economy, and against other demands for help that similarly return a smaller sum of money to the national treasury than they cost.

It really does no good to say, for instance, that educating handicapped children to the limit of their potential is a test of the value of American civilization. Even if one accepts the statement as true, and agrees somewhat reluctantly that some such test should be applied to the purposes of national policy, other claims on the nation's virtue stand alongside: our willingness to receive refugees from abroad, fleeing to America in peril of their lives; to provide aid to countries hardly able to sustain their citizenry, let alone make allowance for their handicapped; to provide for the elderly poor, whose circumstances are indeed precarious; or to underwrite the medical research that might save lives by curing disease. The list is endless. Is not the development of the arts also a measure of civilization? And, historically, has not the ability of a nation to defend itself and its allies also been an important measure of a civilized society, indeed a prerequisite of its survival?

If it were possible to conduct the affairs of a nation as big as ours like those of a family with a known fixed income, Washington could budget what the nation needs to sustain its economy and divide the rest of its revenue among groups and institutions in accordance with the de-

ions of a Congress deliberating on such questions of virtue and need. But our national income is uncertain, and there isn't any way to decide whether money will help the Indians on reservations more than the handicapped people in subways. Choices of that sort are never clear-cut, and never only ethical.

In general, the programs to help the handicapped, even those having to do with transportation or the schools, enjoy nothing but support. No one is opposed to them in spirit, and so they become enacted with more promise than money. When the time comes to find the money, arguments begin, and indignation begins to mount in those who took seriously the congressional pledge to virtue, without tarrying to ask whether the people who voted for the orders to real government would also vote for the dollars needed to make their orders binding.

What the handicapped are finding is that the general approbation of their cause—actually a hidden self-approbation on the part of sympathizers who flaunt their own splendid morality—disappears when the general public learns that unless the economy is constantly expanding, it is impossible for one group to get more without another getting less. Even those who cheer for helping the handicapped are startled to find that transportation for them may mean more trouble for a system already at the brink of collapse, or that school buses are going up while their children's class must now be reshaped to allow for the presence of an emotionally disturbed child who is being "mainstreamed" at the suggestion of the doctor.

Surely the nation will continue to search for ways to mitigate the isolation and suffering of the handicapped, but the pace at which this progress proceeds depends not so much on the rage of the disabled, or that of their often self-righteous champions, but on the extent to which the nation as a whole will develop the means to make good on its promises. And will keep from making new promises to compete for whatever resources are available. □

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THEORETICAL FAMILIES

Honor thy children

by Sally Helgesen

THE FATE of the family has preoccupied America for the last few decades. In the Sixties, we were treated to endless documentaries, television specials, and magazine articles about the destruction of that fragile unit; now, as the Eighties begin, we are inundated with evidence of concern for its restoration. Like other American institutions, the family has survived a succession of often antithetical national ideologies, and, like other American institutions, it has been their victim. We are a practical, experimental, and utopian people, eager to give every fad or idea concrete expression, and so we use our institutions to effect whatever social

change we feel is needed—until we feel the need for another kind of change.

The family is particularly vulnerable to our faddish idealism: in one decade it is perceived as an example of all that is repressive in society; in the next, it becomes an expression of the highest social good. It is our habit to alternately denigrate and exalt our institutions thus. Unfortunately, when we do so with the family, our children get caught in the crossfire.

When the national mood rides the vanguard of radicalism, as it did in the Sixties, we try to raise children who will meet our romantic image of the emancipated men and women demanded by the "New Age"; when the mood settles into reaction, as is the case now, we wonder what be-

came of childhood innocence and parental authority, and prepare new laws to protect these valued eternal. Our doing so may be regarded as a healthy response to the excesses of miscalculated past, but occurring, as it does, within the wider frame of our experimentalism and our utopianism, it is also opportunistic, deluded, and inhumane. Children are not *tabulae rasae*, on which we are free to imprint our idealized vision of the future; they are not made for experiment. They are people, who will "turn out" as they will, but the need our help, our good example, and our common sense to guide them.

Sally Helgesen is a regular contributor to Harper's and the author of Wildcatters, recently published by Doubleday.



Perico Pastor

THE ELECTION of Ronald Reagan did not signify simply that Americans were weary of high taxes and loose spending and eager for more guns and less butter. As becomes more apparent every day, it also indicated a vague national yearning for a return to what are imagined to be good old-fashioned values. Reagan and the conservative senators and congressmen who achieved victory with him, were elected in part because they were perceived as "pro-family"—against abortion, against busing, against pornography, against the Equal Rights Amendment, and for spanking and prayer in the schools. Being "pro-family" was widely equated with wanting to restore good old-fashioned values brought back.

It may be worthwhile to note co



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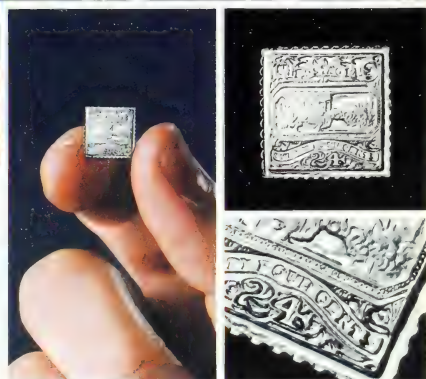
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tain ironies attendant on the sudden display of so much "pro-family" fervor. The electorate that went to the polls in 1980, whatever its yearnings or ideals, was, in fact, representative of a nation whose citizens had proven increasingly unable to maintain any stability in their family lives, unable to manage themselves, their children, their husbands or wives in a way that might contribute to a strong and defendable nation, a humane and dynamic culture. In the wake of their failure, people asked the government to take on the task for them, to make the family cohesive, by reversing the reformist or libertarian laws of the last few decades that had accompanied, heralded, and sometimes hastened its decline.

The hypocrisy of this effort may be gauged by a brief examination of the provenance and support of the Family Protection Act, a compendium of thirty laws and prohibitions that many conservatives and their constituents assume will restore an America that probably never was, and most certainly will never be again. The proposed act provides parents with a "cause of action" if their child's school prohibits them from participating in decisions on religion courses, from visiting the classroom at will, or from "reviewing" textbooks before they are purchased by the school board. It gives local schools the authority to regulate "sex intermingling," reinstates "voluntary" school prayer, prohibits funds for busing, and, in an odd twist of phrase, prevents funds from being used to promote educational material that "denigrates the role of women as it has been historically understood." It further seeks to strengthen "traditional family life" by removing constraints against the physical abuse of wives and children.

The bill was sponsored in 1979 by Sen. Paul Laxalt (Rep.-Nev.), Ronald Reagan's campaign chairman; it was reintroduced on his behalf to the Ninety-eighth Congress in June 1981. In the context, it seems worth noting that as governor of Nevada, Laxalt dispensed the gaming licenses that gave Howard Hughes his foothold in Las Vegas and granted

his own brother a concession on Reno's gambling parlors; that he entered the casino business himself during the brief spell between his governorship and election to the United States Senate; and that he recently divorced his wife of twenty years to marry a woman half his age. It should further be recorded that two of the bill's original sponsors have been arrested on morals charges for homosexual acts, while a third advocate was convicted for bribery, after which his wife left him and later appeared in a nude photo spread in *Playboy*.

Nor can it escape notice that Ronald Reagan, whose election marked the surge of "pro-family" fervor, is himself a divorced man married to a divorced woman, and his children quite publicly pursue the kind of "lifestyles" that pro-family supporters supposedly find so shocking. This is not to throw stones, but rather to observe that many of those whom opportunity has cast in the role of moral spokesmen are playing the game on both sides, inured to the untenableness of their position either by absolute cynicism or by an inability to distinguish between reality and fantasy. Under such circumstances, irony approaches the neighborhood of schizophrenia.

SUCH schizophrenia might serve as a metaphor for the false-ness and shallowness of America's sudden, faddish commitment to "good old-fashioned values." For even as the polls, the media, and politicians respond to the popular nostalgia for a Norman Rockwell vision of Mom, Dad, Bud, and Sis enjoying a backyard barbecue, reality speaks of continuing chaos and disintegration, which classroom prayer, censored textbooks, or, eventually, the teaching of "scientific creationism" can do little to reverse.

Before I ponder the cause for such hypocrisy, let me specify what I mean by chaos and disintegration in American family life. This is how things stood as the 1980s began:

One million children were living on the streets, and police estimated that as many as one-third of them

were supporting themselves through prostitution.

40 percent of the girls and 27 percent of the boys entering drug rehabilitation programs were found to have been sexually abused at home before they turned to drugs.

Pornography accounted for 50 percent of all sales in the booming "videodisc" industry. Cable-television stations, the number of which was also steadily escalating, were offering a variety of X-rated programs. Millions were now able to view orgies, beatings, and a variety of females "begging for it" without having to leave the comfort of their own living rooms, and it was nearly impossible to find a hotel or motel that did not feature pornography as the staple on its "in-house" television channel.

NBC showed a prime-time movie about a pedophilic school-softball coach and his "little angel." The high point in the show came when the twelve-year-old heroine ran her finger up and suggestively down the beleaguered pedophile's chest, informing him that she was "getting bigger—and better" all the time.

A California judge upheld the right of apartment owners to continue the widespread practice of barring families with children from renting.

More teenagers committed suicide than ever before. Alcoholism among high-school students rose sharply.

The incidence of venereal diseases and pregnancy among unmarried teenagers was declared "epidemic," despite widespread sex-education programs in the schools.

In 1979, a fifth of all violent crime were committed by youths under the age of eighteen.

The reading ability of schoolchildren continued to decline at certain levels, as did scores on college-entry examinations.

Schools across the nation closed because communities were unwilling to pay the taxes to support them.

It was possible to order the "private services" of a twelve-year-old boy or girl over the phone from a number listed in a New York sex magazine, and to pay for the child by credit card.

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Through the mail one could order a cartoon-illustrated manual for child molesters, which offered practical tips on how to hang around a playground without looking suspicious, what lines to use to lure children away, and how to leave the fewest incriminating marks on one's victim in the event that a body is found by the police.

A recital of such facts would suggest that America in the 1980s is most emphatically not a country in which the protection, safety, and guidance of children is of paramount concern. Some may conclude that legislation like the Family Protection Act is therefore needed in order to reverse the situation. But the situation exists because of the nature and priorities of the society itself, and it seems unrealistic to rely on retrograde laws to alter circumstances that result largely from adults' desire for mobility, personal freedom, and ceaseless change. In upholding the American tradition of putting ideology in the service of achieving utopian ends, those who seek to legislate a return to good old-fashioned values often try to coerce the young into becoming the exemplars that they themselves have no intention of being.

American ideology may be tending toward conservatism again, but the legacy of the reformers is inescapable. Decked out in the robes of the expert—the educational psychologist, the early-childhood specialist, and, more recently, the “parenting” adviser or sex educator—social reformers over the last twenty years have successfully hawked nostrums of which the sleaziest snake-oil salesman would be ashamed. The wholesaling of reformist nostrums has a long history, particularly as it has affected children.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the American education system underwent a reformation more far-reaching and complete than could have been achieved in Europe, where schools were more bound by tradition. The men and women who effected the

reforms were concerned with institutionalizing the romantic, child-centered philosophies then popular in Europe. For, while it pleased Europeans to read poems about the child “trailing clouds of glory as he comes from God, who is his home,” and to peruse the trumpeting of Rousseau, they continued to raise and educate their children in time-honored ways, as subordinates. It remained for the optimistic and practical Americans to try to recast society in the image of the much-vaunted child.

The first American reformer to translate child-centered Romanticism into “scientific principles” that might be applied was G. Stanley Hall, the father of developmental psychology and initiator of the school-reform movement. Hall was an administrator and a teacher of teachers, and thus well able to carry out the changes he believed were necessary. Hall's ideals were implicitly reformist: he believed that “childhood, as it comes fresh from the hand of God, is not corrupt, but illustrates the survival of the most consummate thing in the world”; only by preserving this consummate thing could the corruption of adult society be vanquished. Education must therefore cease to be “scholastic” and become “pedocentric” instead; the child must be encouraged to plumb his own depths rather than be subjected to what Hall termed “the fetishism of the alphabet, of the multiplication table, of grammars, of scales, and of bibliolatry.” Emancipated from constricting, adult-directed concerns, the essential child would emerge, “bringing the race to the higher maturity of the Superman that is to be.”

Such high-flown phrases sound absurd to modern ears, but it is on such romantic premises that our present school system was founded. Hall's greatest pupil was John Dewey, the educational reformer whose ideas, expressed in scores of books, have influenced the curriculum and structure of every public and private school in America. Richard Hofstadter, writing about the evolution of the reformist movement, attributes at least some of Dewey's wide influence to the fuzziness of his thought and the infelicity of his expression; what he

said could be made to fit many purposes. Dewey held that by changing the focus of education from discipline to activity, the individual child's natural capacity for “growth” would be spontaneously realized and his spirit freed from the “straitjacket” that had shackled previous generations. Left to find his own direction the child would mature not as the willful, self-involved, and individualistic creature one might expect, but—somehow very naturally—as a being infused with a sociable spirit of cooperativeness and altruism. Despite the apparent gulf between Dewey's means and his intended ends his ideas met with little opposition and Hall's “pedocentric” vision found fast acceptance in the rapidly growing American schools of the early twentieth century. And while these men could hardly have guessed that their emphasis on a child's “needs” would, by the 1970s, lead to widespread illiteracy, not to mention accreditation for such course as “How Can I Be More Popular With the Crowd?” or “Dressing for Success,” eventual chaos is clearly foreshadowed in their optimistic thought.

THE ATTITUDE of the early reformers survives in the current horde of education experts. Such experts were originally graduates of the reformist Normal Schools or pupils of famous pedagogical idealists (in recent years their qualifications have grown more ambiguous), and one of their traditional tasks has been to supply the handbooks and manuals that mobilize Americans have consulted for instruction in the art of raising children. Most such manuals are reformist: their ultimate aim is to build what the author imagines to be a superior world—better organized, more humane, less sexist—by molding the children who will supposedly inhabit that world. The philosophical world view of a Thomas Watson, Benjamin Spock, or a Letty Cottin Pogrebin may find or lose favor at the whim of fashion dictates, but the utopian premises of the tomes they write reflect a similar purpose: chil-

ren are used as a means to effect the salvation of an ugly and disappointing world.

Behind the reformers' schemes for change, one senses a despair about their own ability to control or shape the present, and an unselfish determination to save future generations from their own self-doubts. Conservatives may hope that their children will be better than they themselves can be, but reformers hope that their children will be altogether different. Expression to this curious attitude was given by the pioneering "sex-education expert" and reformer Dr. Mary Calderone, former medical director of Planned Parenthood of America and now president of the Sex Information and Education Council of the United States. In an excellent book *Sex by Prescription*, Thomas Szasz quotes Calderone speaking to a gathering of her colleagues. "What kind of sexual persons would we like our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren to become?" she asks, then answers her own question. "We could hope that they are not to be irritable, leering, guilt-ridden, pathetic, compulsive, joyless. In other words, *not like ourselves!*" Szasz questions Calderone's sincerity, but would guess that she was not being singenuous when she made these marks. Rather, with the self-denigrating passion of the true reformer, she was expressing the altruistic desire to save future generations from very human fate—that of sometimes feeling inadequate.

Yet altruistic hopes are often betrayed by the very means chosen to effect them: in the case of the sexual-education reformers, this is particularly true. Their schemes for ensuring that future generations will be different are bizarre, and seem almost signed to invite ridicule: small children are shepherded on "bath-tub tours" in an effort to instill in them a healthy attitude toward the notions of the opposite sex; boys are made to climb into gynecologists' trunks in order that they may learn that it's like to be a woman; junior-high schoolers are enlisted in debates about the superiority of this or that masturbation technique. Is it any

wonder, when such are the tools of change, that utopian hopes for future generations are doomed to disappointment?

THE SINGLE American value most inimical to the sane and commonsensical rearing of children is mobility, both geographical and spiritual. A passion for bettering themselves inspired those who founded and settled this country. In the days of the ever-expanding frontier, the ideal of bettering oneself was inseparable from the dream of establishing cities and founding families who would populate them, of connecting one's name to a place and making it live in history. But when the frontier closed, and the willingness to accept the responsibilities and idealism of manifest destiny was lost during the prosperous and morally confused postwar years, the desire for space and freedom so characteristic of the American temperament could no longer be harnessed for social benefit.

In the business and commercial world, bettering oneself came to mean simply making more money; in the lofty realm of the academy and among the educated professional classes, it implied the individual's absolute right to fulfillment and self-development. Neither of these doctrines is particularly suited to meeting the needs of children. The desire to make more money may entail a great deal of moving from place to place, or require compromises that lessen one's moral stature and respectability. "I was doing it for my family!"—how many times have we heard thugs, crooks, con men, and mafiosi take that line of defense? The desire for absolute self-fulfillment or self-expression may at times necessitate divorce, a woman's leaving her children to haphazard care, random promiscuity, overt homosexuality, or the frequent changing of jobs, interests, friends, or place of residence—what is these days called "keeping one's lifestyle options open." Children do not always benefit by our getting what we think we need.

That a conflict exists seems obvi-

ous, yet even those who are torn by it are unable to admit the paradox. A vivid example springs to mind. Last year, *The New York Times* Home section ran an enthusiastic feature on the pioneering "lifestyle" evolved by a well-known concert producer, "Jerry," and his wife of twenty-some years, "Gerri." The couple had six children, and the youngest was only five, but Gerri had nonetheless decided that submerging her individual identity within the web of the family was no longer desirable. Eager to "expand her horizons," Gerri persuaded Jerry to set her up in business running a gift shop in a mall in Hawaii while he stayed home in New York City and raised the kids. "The chance was just too good to pass up," explained Gerri, referring to the empty boutique space in the Hawaiian mall. She acknowledged that her children missed her very much, but she expressed optimism that the entire family would benefit in the long run from "having a mommy who knew who she was."

Despite such willful delusions, the past fifteen years of experiment would seem to indicate that an individual's right to free expression and self-determination sometimes, perhaps often, comes into unavoidable conflict with the demands of family life, which, after all, involve a certain amount of compromise. The fact is that the traditional role children play, as hindrances to mobility and obstacles in the way of the individual's illusions of absolute importance, inescapably makes them the villains in an individualistic society like ours. As more and more of us refuse to accept these limits, children become the focus of our resentment and antagonism; we compensate for the unhappy situation by sentimentalizing those whose existence and demand for care trouble us profoundly. Alternately exalted and neglected, children become tools for our guilt-inspired utopian fantasies, and, when they fail to respond according to our program, we wonder what went wrong, and how "the family," which we often perceive as separate from ourselves, has failed. □

GOING UPTOWN

State your business, white man

by Steve Salerno

I STAND, conspicuously Caucasian, in the lobby of 2937 Eighth Avenue. The building belongs to the Polo Grounds Towers, a city housing project built more or less on the site where now-aging New Yorkers found a revelation in the young Willie Mays, and where, somewhat more recently, two young policemen found eternity lying in ambush behind a phony distress call.

My wristwatch reads 8:08. Seven minutes, it is, since I walked into the uncomfortable stares that always confront me uptown. I recall the first time I stood in one of the Polo Grounds buildings, some six years ago.

I had asked the heavysset, middle-aged, package-laden black woman to my right why it took so long for any of the three ostensible elevators to return to base, whereupon she looked at me with amused contempt, and responded through a toothless smirk: "Hey, baby, this ain't Sutton Place. Only one elevator workin' these days—and you damn lucky that one workin'!"

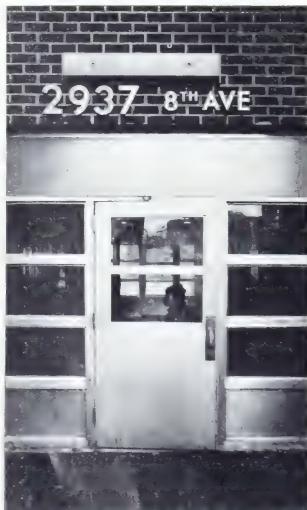
The half-dozen teenagers who burst with raucous abandon through the building door just a second ago, filling the lobby with lewdness and laughter, now note my presence and fall instantly silent in mid-expletive, en masse. They are studying me in an effort to determine exactly what level of the white establishment, and thus how much of a personal threat, I might represent.

Now and then, in the past, more ominous groups of teenagers have encircled me, measured me, taunted me, implying sinister intentions. Only once did my tormentors pursue it beyond the verbal stage. That, however, was in the East New York section of Brooklyn, where, contrary to popular belief, the average visitor has far more to fear than in all but the very worst parts of Harlem. (I received a minor knife wound in the upper leg; only through the skillful and decidedly unorthodox use of a two-foot carpenter's level was I able to extricate myself intact from that predicament.)

The elevator finally arrives. I shuffle in, along with the crowd of eight or nine others that has assembled since the last elevator departure, a sense that I am the subject of much conjecture: whites are routinely running about the projects during daylight, but rarely ride the elevator after dark. I am used to the attention, and even the occasional challenging comment leaves me unruffled. Once, from the rear of a full car, an authoritative but very young voice called out, "State your business, white man!" Everybody broke up. What's the alternative?

As the elevator grudgingly heaves skyward, a little black girl, her hair done in the finest, tiniest, most perfect braids, tentatively approaches me, much like a small puppy investigating uncharted territory. She eventually offers a child's wonderful ingenuous and carefree smile.

The door opens at 16, my floor. Someone has carefully altered the number on the wall opposite the elevator, so that it now reads 46. Besides the violated number is a large, multicolored sketch of a man and woman having sexual intercourse, complete and anatomically correct down to the most minute detail. Some of the misguided ghetto artists are quite fabulously endowed (as are the love depicted in the sketch). They are also quite mobile, since their work, identified by their first names and street numbers, appears throughout the city on subway cars, buses, and mailboxes. Someday I hope to run into Eddie 138, who is without question



Steve Salerno writes for The New York Times, Newsday, and a variety of other publications.

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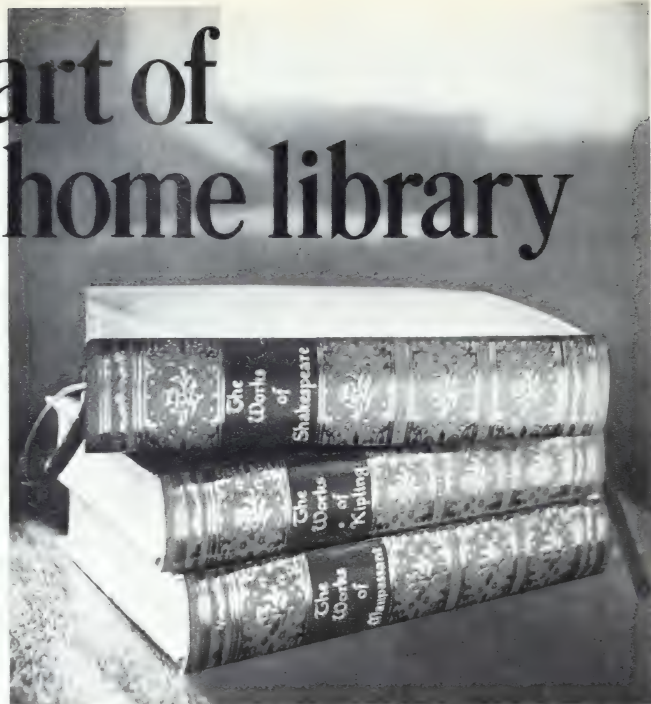
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I walk over to the window alongside the elevator bank, scanning the avenue below in search of my car. Twice I have come back to the street to find my tires flattened. Twice I have found my car covered with obscene or racist graffiti. Once I found nothing—just an empty space and a quartet of giggling adolescents where my Audi had been. The car turned up three days later, underneath the approach to the Triborough Bridge, totally stripped. Tonight I am parked next to a Mr. Softee truck, near a streetlight, so I feel relatively unconcerned. Still, it never hurts to look.

I AM HERE today courtesy of a tiny *New York Times* ad that I answered on a whim back in 1974. The ad said simply, SHOP AT HOME SALES, UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITY. Since then, my unlimited opportunity has consisted mostly of wandering the streets of uptown New York singing the joys of the custom wall mirror to those who have availed themselves of our "no-obligation service."

This evening's appointment is with a Mr. Watson, whose apartment looms ahead at the end of a long, dimly lit hallway. My knock at the door elicits a gruff "Jus' a minute" from somewhere toward the rear of the apartment. I hear shuffling footsteps, followed by the now familiar sequence of front-door sounds: the tinny, rattling noise of the peephole cover being lifted, the jiggling of keys, the click of a tumbler, the whooshing sound of a dead bolt Segal lock. The door opens, and a tall, gray-haired man faces me. Tree-trunk arms protrude from a V-neck undershirt. Khaki slacks, desperately in need of a dry cleaner's attentions, sag loosely about a commanding waistline. The gruff impression dissolves as the large man breaks into a luminous grin.

"You the mirro' man? C'mon in. Been waitin' on you."

The hand I offer is promptly ingested by an enormous, exuberant

Doberman that has materialized suddenly at the man's side. My customer chuckles benignly.

"Aw, he just a pup, you know? He ain't serious. He only playin' wit' you." Then, with mock firmness, to the dog: "Satan! C'mon now, boy. Quit playin' wit' the man's arm."

Satan pardons my arm and begins playing with my calf. My host has already turned and begun walking toward the tiny kitchen, motioning for me to follow. Not wanting to appear something less than masculine, I shrug and hobble after him, dragging the dog along with me, while trying to recall the name of that place on York Avenue that sells prosthetic devices.

The man offers me a seat at a dinnette table barely large enough to accommodate two plates, bowing slightly and extending his arm in the direction of the one good chair (the other has obviously been used by Satan as a teething ring). His gesture exudes the gallant grace of one who, he later tells me, would like to have been the maitre d' at a fashionable midtown restaurant, "a real ritzy place. But I couldn't; none of us could. Not back then."

I smile a thank you and sit. My furry friend resumes his work on my hand, whereupon the burly man grabs a folded newspaper that is perched atop the much scratched two-slice toaster. The dog bolts out of the room, emitting puppylike yelps.

"Got to keep 'em in line, you know?" the man explains, shaking his impromptu club pointedly in the air between us. "Else they begins to think they's the boss."

"Now, what you got to show me?"

I open my sample case and dive into a presentation that has become so much a part of me that I have to monitor myself at parties to prevent my lapsing into it whenever someone innocently asks what I do for a living. With razor-sharp psychology I go after his ego, implying that wall-to-wall mirrors will make him the envy of his friends, will give his bleak apartment the tailored look of a midtown duplex, will generally enable him to transcend being a poor, aging, overweight black man. He picks the style he would like—or,

more accurately, he picks what he thinks his "old lady" would like, since the mirror is being done as surprise for her in honor of the fortieth (fortieth!) wedding anniversary. The price I quote troubles him, but only momentarily, as that avuncular smile presently reappears as he asks, "You take Social Security checks for a down payment?"

The question arouses within me feelings of guilt and embarrassment. His kitchen wallpaper is tattered and peeling; his cheap, checkered linoleum is faded and curled up at the edges; cracked dishes are piled high and wide in the sink, which is missing much of its onetime porcelainized finish; the small portable clothes dryer looks to be Sears, Roebuck original model, and there is a puddle of tepid water collecting under correspondingly ancient washing machine from which come the sporadic sounds of impending mechanical death. Yet the man wants to endorse a Social Security check in order to put up \$900 worth of wall mirror.

Sometimes I hate this job.

A CONSENSUS of New York architects might describe Harlem as the part of Manhattan that extends from 106 Street to 160th Street, and from river to river. To the midtown aristocrats those able to afford the East Side, the Forties, Fifties, and Sixties, anything above 90th Street is to sneered at. Needless to say, the who have recently forked over enormous sums of money to buy into renovated co-ops in the Nineties would beg to differ. Harlemites themselves generally adopt the least restrictive view, often extending Harlem's formal northern border as far as the George Washington Bridge or beyond. On the other hand, those who have fled from Harlem up to the generally more stable bridge district quite naturally prefer to fix the former neighborhood's uppermost limit considerably lower. Real-estate speculators, seeking to resuscitate the area around Columbia, are wont to exempt from inclusion that stretch between Broadway and Riverside Drive that runs adjacent to the u

versity. And suburbanites, inundated nightly with the body count on the news, probably equate most of the city with its infamous upper half.

Suburbanites and midtowners also have an unrealistically bleak picture of the uptown housing situation. Harlem is hardly one huge, crumbling tenement. Those for whom the term "housing development" evokes visions of a bombed-out slum, complete with rats rummaging through garbage-strewn halls, would be astonished at the number of comfortable, if not opulent, building complexes that dot Harlem's landscape.

Two such complexes—Esplanade Plaza and Lenox Terrace Apartments—rise impressively out of Harlem's northern end. An appointment this day will take me to 720 Lenox, n "the Esplanade," probably the more prestigious of the two (although Percy Sutton, longtime political force, radio-station magnate, and resident of "the Terrace," might argue the point; after all, the Terrace has doormen in its doorways—Esplanade Plaza employs uniformed security guards). Though mainly populated by city employees and nurses from Harlem's nearby hospitals, it is the elegant retired ladies, wearing fox stoles to walk their lainty French poodles, who provide these developments with their genteel flavor and form, perhaps, the last remaining link to Harlem's glamorous prewar past. They are, like their totes, anachronisms, belonging in a different time; a time, twenty or thirty years before the Esplanade's debut, when the poodle could have been walked anywhere along 145th Street, or well down Lenox Avenue, without fear. Now, most of the nighttime dog walkers venture no farther than the bus depot that occupies the length of 147th Street and half a block between Lenox and Seventh avenues. And yet the decay of the surrounding area notwithstanding, an apartment in Esplanade Plaza is still something which an incredible number of contemporary middle-class Harlemites aspire.

Cheerful ceramic tiles are found in a variety of colors and patterns in the lobbies of the six Esplanade buildings, in marked contrast to the



Bob Adelman

sparse, institutional look of the Polo Grounds and other city housing projects. I step into an elevator and am carried promptly to the eighth floor. Though I am not alone in the car, there is neither snickering nor staring going on around me. In the Esplanade, as in the Terrace, my presence is routine and accepted, for many of the tenants maintain after-hours interracial friendships.

A very proper, dignified "Who's there, please?" greets my arrival at apartment 8B. By the tenor of the male voice, I know what to expect. The man on the other side of the door is proud of his assimilation into mainstream society. His preferred libation—which I will, of course, be politely offered—is white wine, rather than a bottle of Bud, and he favors Calvin Klein ensembles over khaki pants or lowly dungarees. The background music will consist of mood tunes or soft Brazilian jazz, never anything as unabashedly provocative as hard rock or heavy soul. Copies of *Newsweek* and *Esquire* will adorn his wicker coffee table. (*Ebony* and *Jet* can be found tucked neatly in his natural cedar bookshelf, but are not prominently displayed.) If he is married, his children will have traditional names like Michael or Eric, Jennifer or Elizabeth, as opposed to the African derivatives (such as Karim or Naima) currently popular among blacks lower on the socioeconomic ladder.

The door swings open to reveal

an extremely good-looking, fortyish black man wearing a Jordache crew-neck sweater through which the collar of a silk shirt protrudes. He enthusiastically shakes my hand, beaming a grin of toothpaste-commercial quality. I smile, too—partly in response to his contagious good humor, and partly out of my own sense of self-satisfied vindication. Knowing this man as well as he knows himself (or possibly better, I think), I walk in and go to work, noting the empty bottle of Paul Masson chablis that stands on the dining room table.

THE HEAVY metal door swings open and into luscious focus comes a young creature of black and Hispanic heritage, clad only in a diaphanous nightgown and a wispy pair of bikini underpants. She is eighteen, maybe twenty at most, and quite phenomenally assembled, with modified negroid features peeking out seductively from under the layers of her long, wavy black hair. In earlier days, more naïve and reckless days, I used to consider every such greeting an invitation, but too many rebuffs have made me a bit more circumspect. Nor was it unusual for the young woman's appearance to be followed in short order by that of a young male, similarly "dressed." Thus I have learned to accept such events as merely a part of summertime life in the projects. There is no air conditioning in

GOING UPTOWN

these buildings; my nubile nymph simply happens to be comfortable walking around in minimal clothing.

Just as we sit down, the muted cries of an infant summon the lovely young girl back into the bedroom. She reappears a moment later embracing a plump baby boy, and I suddenly realize that she is the head of the house. The baby's corpulence is oddly incongruous with the petite woman-child who now proudly holds him forward for me to inspect.

"This is Hector," she announces. "Do you like the name Hector?"

"Yes," I lie. For years I have wondered why so many Puerto Rican parents saddle their young with names like Felix and Hector.

Out of the blue, she asks where I live. My reply, that I have a house on Long Island, fascinates her.

"Long Island! I was there once," she says with a twinkle in her eye and an animation in her voice that would seem more appropriate if she were six years old and we were talking about Disneyland.

"Someday, we are going to move away from here, to someplace like Long Island, so my son can grow up

strong and healthy without getting into the stuff that goes on around here." She kisses little Hector with a reverent tenderness that makes me feel as if I am privy to something august and unusual, something quite beyond the emotional scope of the pampered Manhasset housewife who parks the kids at Grandma's as a prelude to a leisurely and exorbitant afternoon at Lord & Taylor's. The carnal chemistry I felt on first seeing the delicious shape at the door has now yielded to a respectful fondness for the madonna who sits before me, playfully nibbling her little boy's ear. I smile with the realization that there is still so much for me to learn about myself here, of all places.

As I stand in the elevator, still thinking of the young mother and her Hector, a wiry black forearm is suddenly thrust into the diminishing space between the doorframe and the closing elevator door. The pitted black rubber molding on the door's leading edge reaches the arm, pauses momentarily, then recedes. Through the opening and into the corner of the elevator car, opposite me, slithers a very tall, very thin adolescent

wearing tennis sneakers, rust-colored pants, an oversized and overused tan raincoat (it is brilliantly sunny outdoors), and one of those Pittsburgh Pirate baseball caps that became so fashionable the year the Bucs won the World Series. He is, I am quite sure, appraising me. The door closes, the car begins its leisurely descent.

"Got a cigarette, man?" His tone is even and controlled, rugged but not menacing. Nothing to worry about. I am relieved as I tell him that I don't smoke.

"Got any money, man?" Something to worry about.

I look straight at him; he returns my stare. He is slouched back against the wall of the elevator, hands in his pockets, mouth just on the verge of a sneer, eyebrows raised inquisitively above drooping eyelids. The elevator is still some fifteen floors above sea level, and moving slowly. I decide to try bravado. After all, the kid is no more than seventeen or eighteen years old, and although he stands about my height, I have a significant edge in muscularity. I should be able to bluff my way through.

"You better cool it, sonny," I



begin in my very best John Wayne-sque voice. "You can get hurt asking questions like that."

He seems to reach a bit deeper into his right raincoat pocket, where now, for the first time, note a threatening bulge. Don't ask me why, but I instinctively start to unzip my ample case, as if I have a trump card of my own to play.

"Okay, brother, you made your point," my adversary concedes, pulling both hands from their respective pockets and putting them up at chest level, slightly toward me, palms forward, in a gesture of truce. He presses the button for the fifth floor, walks to the door with his back to me, and gets off without saying another word.

LUNCHTIME finds me in the Kansas Fried Chicken take-out store on Lenox Avenue.

Just about two years ago, right where I am standing as I give my order, the danger of running a downtown business and a hard-working black man's life were summed up in chalk outline on the floor. As the newspapers told it, two shotgun-wielding thieves were unhappy with the take, and in a merciless act that is become an almost commonplace introduction to robberies in Harlem, one of the disgruntled bandits fired his awesome weapon point-blank into the owner's face. For weeks after the shooting, residents in this bleakest of Harlem's many bleak neighborhoods—neighborhoods in which tenement dwellers are forced to cope with incomprehensible violence on a daily basis—even the more stoic, senior residents remained shaken and dazed.

Clutching the steering wheel in one hand and a chicken leg in the other, I make the right turn onto St. Nicholas Avenue, driving toward a 13rd Street rendezvous. Several blocks ahead, a collapsed derelict is being loaded into an Emergency Medical Service ambulance. The attendants jump in and the vehicle speeds off, going right past the prominent sign for Sydenham Hospital on its way to some unknown facility. It occurs to me that the uninformed might well have found the scene

comical, especially in light of the EMS's unenviable reputation for fallibility. (Hey, fellas, come back! The hospital's over here.) Yet I know that to the local inhabitants who once entrusted their health and well-being to this characteristic casualty of the contemporary urban fiscal trauma, nothing could be less funny. I watch the flashing lights turn abruptly into the noisy congestion of 125th Street.

Speaking of which: perhaps nowhere is the disparity between Harlem fact and Harlem fiction more distinct than in the average non-Harlemite's concept of 125th Street. Most of my friends, even those who live somewhere in the city and should thus know better, use the term "125th Street" pejoratively, as a symbol of decadent hopelessness.

An acquaintance once said, on returning from his first ear-shattering day at a Long Island pistol range, "I felt like I was on 125th Street." In reality, the street, at least for most of its length, is a bustling, reasonably well-maintained center of local commerce. Stores of all descriptions separate a variety of restaurants, banks, and modest-sized office buildings. And while it may be true that the city projects that claim 125th Street's south side, from Eighth Avenue west to Broadway, house some of New York's poorer residents, it is equally true that I have never had a truly frightful experience in my half-dozen years working that much maligned stretch. Actually, given the conditions under which these people live—elevators that fail to elevate, maintenance men who fail to maintain, police who fail to police, a percentage of incorrigible neighbors who fail to observe some of the fundamental rules of sanitary living—the jovial passivity with which the majority of them face the day is astounding. Possibly, religion has much to do with it; in many project apartments the Bible, open to a favorite page, sits on the dining-room table, or right next to the TV guide and other oft-used reading matter. This in contrast to midtown, where the expensively bound (but always closed) Bibles are relegated to a permanent position somewhere on a teak bookshelf. Clearly, the rewards of an after-

life are more stirring to those who have so few rewards in this one.

THE END of another day. I turn the key, and the trusted engine beneath the hood of my 1973 Cougar roars to life. I stop for the light at the corner of 116th Street and Fifth Avenue, where a ragged-looking group of street people are talking street talk. The sign over their heads, haphazardly hand-painted directly on the concrete wall in red block letters, says AUTO PARTS, but there is no corresponding business below. I search among the group and think I see, in the faint glow from the street-light, a familiar pair of eyes. They find me as well and brighten noticeably, imparting an almost childlike appearance to the craggy, bestubbled senior citizen's face to which they belong. The slight, gray-haired man excuses himself, and walks toward my car in his memorable, bouncy but arthritic strut.

"Ehhh, Fontana, how you doin'?"

He calls me Fontana; I have no idea why. He has always called me that, since the lovely spring day three years ago when my car clock went awry and I pulled over to ask if he would happen to know what time it was.

We trade small talk, and I begin to drift into modified jive talk. I want to kick myself, but he doesn't seem offended by my subconscious patronizing. I tell him I don't think it matters who won the election, nobody's gonna deliver what they promised anyway.

"You got that right, you got that right," he agrees, nodding.

The light changes. He taps me on the elbow, and tells me it was nice to see me again. I say the same; I feel the same. He appears, from what little I know of him, to be a genuinely warm, completely guileless individual. Yet I have never even asked him his name, and I feel guilty for the oversight. I often think that when he dies, I would like to go to the funeral, send a few dollars to his lady—do something.

I know I won't. □

Beyond headlines.



with correspondent
Charlayne Hunter-Gault

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THE INFORMANT

Meet the biggest dealer in Miami's biggest industry

by John Rothchild

MIAMI RESIDENTS don't wear many clothes, but they have more to hide, per capita, than inhabitants of any other city in the nation. They plot secret military missions in Cuba and carry out secret commercial missions in Colombia. At roadside bars, exiles from corrupt regimes and their political intriguers mingle with smugglers and other conventional criminals. In New York or Washington, one asks, "What does he do?" In Miami, one asks, "What does he really do?"

To describe crime as Miami's problem would be like describing oil as Houston's problem. The Quechua Indians of Peru, who have no word for "problem" in their language, give us a noble example of resignation that might be applied to this rogue city. The police and the courts, however, cannot respond as Quechuas, and they depend on informants to guide them through the murk. A city as full of criminal conspiracies as Miami is an informant's mecca. That is why there are days when the criminal justice system (as it is optimistically called) sometimes seems to be run by Ricardo "the Monkey" Morales.

For fourteen years, this stocky and intimidating Cuban exile has whispered into ears at the FBI, the CIA, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Internal Revenue Service, the Miami and county police, and the state and federal prosecutor's offices. He has informed about terrorism, then about drugs, and now, his most inspired effort to date, about ter-

rorism *with* drugs. But Morales is not just an observer. In Morales's latest judicial happening, Tick-Talks (so named because it involved a bugged wall clock), Ricardo "the Monkey" Morales has made most of the major decisions for both the defendants and the prosecutors. His role in this legal proceeding is like that of a patient who directs his own gallbladder operation.

THE CUBANS began to flood Miami after Castro's overthrow of Batista in 1959. They were looking over their shoulders, hoping to return and recapture their homeland, but that hasn't happened. Many of their American hosts expected that the Cuban culture would have been diluted in the melting pot by now, but that hasn't happened, either. Miami was once a Southern town, but the city has grown to resemble Santiago or Guayaquil much more than it resembles Birmingham or Mobile. Latin American inhabitants have been partially assimilated, of course, but they have affected Miami much more than Miami them. There are now nearly 200,000 Cubans in the city alone (out of a total population of 350,000), and 600,000 in Dade County as a whole (out of 1.6 million). These figures don't include 125,000 who arrived as recently as the 1980 Mariel boat-lift. They have been joined by 16,000 Nicaraguans and a growing number of Salvadorans. In Miami, Spanish is a more useful language

John Rothchild lives and writes in Miami.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

RICARDO "THE MONKEY"	The Informant
MORALES	
HANK ADORNO	Florida state attorney
SIDNEY ARONOVITZ	Federal district court judge
JOE BALL	FBI agent
ORLANDO BOSCH	Terrorist pediatrician
TAYLOR BRANCH	Journalist; acquaintance of Morales
FIDEL CASTRO	Unpopular in Miami
RINA COHAN	Florida state attorney
THE CONDOM BROTHERS	Friends of Quesada; frequenters of the Mutiny Bar
MR. CZUKAS	U.S. Customs inspector
D. C. DIAZ	Miami police officer
RAUL DIAZ	Sergeant, later lieutenant, of the Dade County Public Safety Department
PHILIP DOHERTY	Miami assistant police chief
JOSÉ "PEPE 70"	Associate of Quesada; informant
GONZALES	
HILDA INCLAN	Journalist
CARLOS THE JACKAL	European terrorist
JOHN F. KENNEDY	Ordered Bay of Pigs; no follow-through
RAUL MARTINEZ	Miami police sergeant
ROBERTO ORTEGA	Not important
ROLANDO OTERO	Anti-Castro activist
POLLACK, SPAIN & O'DONNELL	A law firm
CARLOS QUESADA	Drug dealer; off-and-on friend of Morales; informant
RUDY "THE RED BEARD"	Convicted drug dealer; informant
RODRIGUEZ	
JOHN ROTHCHILD	Journalist
ELIDIO RUIZ	Murder suspect; found dead on Morales's doorstep
JERRY SANFORD	Federal prosecutor; later defense attorney
HELGA SILVA	Journalist on <i>Miami Herald</i>
SAM SMARGON	Florida state attorney; later U.S. attorney
FRANKLIN SOSA	Associate of Quesada; informant
FRANCISCO TAMAYO	Associate of Quesada; informant
MONTY TRAINER	Bar owner
FAUSTO VILLAR	Associate of Quesada; informant
RAFAEL VILLAVERDE	Former CIA employee; social worker; indicted for drug dealing
RAUL VILLAVERDE	Rafael's brother; also indicted
ATLEE WAMPLER	U.S. attorney
GEORGE YOSS	Florida state attorney

than English at gas stations, in sidewalk counters, and even in stores like the Wool worth's in Miami Beach. Many of the exile float in with only the clothes on their backs while rich Venezuelans and Colombians fly in above them to buy condominiums and fancy dresses. The economy is thriving.

A Cuban journalist friend of mine says "Cubans no longer expect to retake their country. Now they want Dade County." Already Miami has a Latin mayor, and for the first time its city council is controlled by Cubans. Now Latinization is moving outward to smaller, contiguous cities such as Miami Beach, and toward the Dade County line. The triumph of the Cubans has created a secondary immigration that of the Gringos who are leaving this area and heading for Ft. Lauderdale in Broward County, where one can still order a McDonald's hamburger in English.

Most Cuban immigrants have been remarkably industrious and law-abiding. The speed at which they worked up from nothing to control this city and its businesses would have been the envy of the Italians and Irish who came to New York in the last century. Yet an active minority of Cubans has created unique legal problems for Miami—unique not only in quantity but also in quality. The CIA is partly responsible for the peculiarities, because in the 1960s the agency used this city as a base for its war against Castro. Hundreds of young Cubans were trained in this war, not only to use machine guns and plastic explosive but also to outsmart the American institutions that were not apprised of the battle plans. When the CIA pulled out, these Cubans didn't just throw away their detonators and go home, which partially explains why *Miami Herald* reporter Helga Silva has a fourteen-page list of unsolved political murders, and why endless grand juries have been called on to ponder terrorist affairs.

When Florida became the national center for the importing of cocaine and marijuana during the 1970s, Miami was asked to fight another unwinnable war, this time against itself. Law-enforcement agencies now struggle against the city's biggest business. Drug case account for more than 50 percent of the criminal proceedings in town; U.S. attorney Atlee Wampler has estimated that if his office closed its doors to new cases, it would take all his full-time prosecutors more than nine years just to handle the backlog. A significant part of Miami's population winks at drug smuggling, the way terrorism was winked at a decade ago.

Like many of his fellow Cubans, Ricardo Morales supported Castro at first. He was trained as a Castro secret-police agent, and his

ast job in Cuba was handling security investigations at Havana airport. He was in his early twenties when he defected in 1960. When he got to Miami, he was recruited by the CIA, which taught him about bombs and about the recoilless rifle, and he took part in various secret missions following the failure of the Bay of Pigs. When the CIA refused to sponsor future raids, Morales left the agency in disgust. That was in 1963. But he returned to take a special assignment in the Congo during 1964 and 1965, partly out of respect for a couple of colorful CIA operatives and partly because he needed the action. When Morales left the Congo, he had acquired a reputation for intensity that exceeds the normal civilized limits. He had the courage to go to the edge of Africa to support his friends, and he had the military training to dispatch them if they became his enemies. Morales has been impressing Miami with high-voltage performances ever since.

A man I know once made a surprise visit to Morales's apartment. He told Morales's girlfriend, who answered the door, that he wanted to have a friendly chat with Ricardo. He was invited to sit in the living room while Morales finished taking a shower. When Morales entered the room, he marched directly to the visitor's briefcase and opened

it without asking permission. The visitor was too startled to object. Morales dredged up the tape recorder, which was already running. He removed the tape cassette and put it in his shirt pocket; he shook out the batteries and placed them at opposite ends of the mantelpiece, like trophies. Then he returned the neutralized recorder to the briefcase. So far, Morales had not said a word. Then Morales pulled out his revolver and laid it on the coffee table. He had disarmed his visitor, and now he was offering up his own concealed weapon for the visitor's inspection. My friend lacked the wit to empty the gun and place the bullets on the mantelpiece, next to the batteries. Morales got out a couple of glasses from a cabinet and poured some Chivas Regal. His mood had shifted from menacing to jovial. "Now," he said, "we can talk." That's the Morales style.

Bombs and babies

ONE DOES NOT grow up hoping to be an informant. Morales got his first opportunity after his arrest in 1968. His fingerprints matched those found on the remains of a bomb that had detonated in the office of a firm that sold medical supplies back to Cuba. The newspaper clipping

"The salvation of informants in Miami is that there is usually somebody else to get."



Ricardo "The Monkey" Morales under arrest

John Rothchild
THE
INFORMANT

shows a handsome young man with a crew cut, looking more like Ricky Ricardo of "I Love Lucy" than a veteran of the Cuban revolution and the Congo wars. The CIA might have lost interest in blowing up Castro, but its Cuban ex-operatives were still practicing on small stores, police stations, and travel agencies in Miami. Ad hoc military brigades formed, broke up, and reformed, often claiming to be following orders from the Invisible Government.

Morales was an important early arrest in the FBI's pursuit of the elusive groupings. But his fingerprints were barely dry before the charges were dropped and Morales was on the temporary FBI payroll. In the lingo, Morales was "flipped." The FBI wanted to use him to get somebody else. The salvation of informants in Miami is that there is usually somebody else to get.

In this case, the somebody else was Orlando Bosch, the terrorist pediatrician. Yes, an exploding baby doctor. Morales got himself a job making bombs for Bosch. He made phony bombs while reporting details of Bosch's upcoming missions back to the FBI. Bosch couldn't understand why his bombs didn't go off, but he kept trying. He and some associates were arrested in the act of shelling a Cuba-bound Polish freighter in the Miami harbor. Morales's testimony at the trial helped convict Bosch and send him to prison in late 1968.

By 1972 the terrorist pediatrician was walking the streets again, and the scowl on his cadaverous face would not make an infant coo. The local prediction was that Morales would replace ships headed for Cuba as Bosch's favorite target. A bomb did explode under Morales's car in 1974, driving shrapnel an inch into the asphalt of West Flagler Street. "I'm not saying it was Dr. Bosch," Morales said as he surveyed the damage. The Monkey reacted with nonchalance, as if his car had suffered a flat tire.

It was a period of narrow escapes for the Monkey. Only a few months before the bombing incident, Elidio Ruiz had been found dead at Morales's front door. Morales had recently informed on this Ruiz character to Sgt. Raul Diaz over at the county police department. Ruiz and Diaz. I know these names begin to sound alike, but reputations depend on our keeping them clear in our minds. Diaz, now a lieutenant, has been one of Morales's favorite informees. Morales informed Diaz that Ruiz had murdered another man who had informed on Ruiz. Exonerated on a technicality, Ruiz went to visit Morales and fell dead. Morales was then arrested for murder himself. But he

was exonerated when a witness couldn't identify him in the courtroom.

So by 1974, Morales had survived a bombing and an attempted murder, had helped send the bomber to jail, had outlived the man who'd tried to kill him, and had deflected bombing and murder charges against himself. These are impressive results. But it was still early in Morales's career. Morales observers were not yet ready to speculate that he might have bombed his own car to cover up a secret alliance with pediatrician Bosch. The Rolando Otero case was the one that really made the Monkey's reputation in Miami.

Otero was another anti-Castro zealot. In 1975, he and Morales were such good friends that Morales had his own key to Otero's apartment. Meanwhile, more bombs were exploding around the city, including one in the men's room at the state attorney's office, one at the FBI building, and one at Miami police headquarters. Sgt. Raul Diaz and FBI agent Jo Ball, who had approved the original Morales flip in 1968, had several meetings with Morales. Once again, the Monkey came to the aid of law enforcement and declared that Otero was their bomber. This was in December 1975.

Having informed on his friend, Morales went back to Otero with some useful advice: leave the country. Otero took it. Then Morales told the understandably upset police that the leak to Otero had come from FBI agent Ball. Then Morales disappeared. In fact, Ball had to execute an affidavit denying that he helped Otero flee. It was impossible to tell who had done what, and whose side Morales was on. Morales at this time was commuting between Miami and Venezuela, where he was developing some new interests.

Otero went to Venezuela looking for work. He had a friend there who was head of airport security for the secret-police agency, DISIP. The friend's name was Ricardo "the Monkey" Morales. Don't ask me how he got that position. But Otero still trusted him enough to show up in his office, looking for a job. By February 1976, two months after informing on him, Morales had hired him in Venezuela and sent him to Chile on some DISIP mission. In Chile, Otero was arrested and extradited back to America to stand trial on the charges Morales had fingered him for. Twice Morales promised American authorities that he would return to Miami to testify against Otero, and twice he didn't show. After an acquittal on federal charges, Otero was convicted of one of the bombings in Florida state court, with out Morales's help.

During this Venezuelan period, Morales exhibited some gray hairs and had raccoon ring

under his eyes. The rumor was that he was under great strain trying to keep his personal affairs in some kind of balance. There was his delicate relationship with Otero, and also his relationship with our old pediatrician friend, Bosch. Bosch was now suspected of blowing up a Cuban airliner in mid-flight, killing all twenty-three people aboard. He also found his way to Venezuela, prompting speculation that he and the Monkey had made up, or perhaps had been collaborating all along. Then Bosch was jailed in Venezuela on a warrant signed by Morales, prompting further speculation that Morales had fooled him again, the way that lucky fools Charlie Brown every October with the football. Or perhaps the warrant was only a ruse. Who knows?

FIRST MET Morales during his sojourn in Caracas. In late 1976, two other journalists and I found ourselves on the same plane to Venezuela as Sgt. Raul Diaz, whom you already know, and Florida state attorneys George Yoss and Hank Adorno. We journalists were going to interview Bosch in his Venezuelan prison; the officials were going to talk to Bosch, and also to Morales, in their second futile effort to get his cooperation against Otero. They were hardly off the plane before they were offering Morales an ingratiating tidbit of information. They told him that some officious journalists had come to Caracas and were poking into international terrorism.

One of the other journalists, my friend Taylor Branch, had declared at the start of the trip: "If we have problems in Venezuela, I know a Cuban named Morales who runs security at the airport. He will help us out." We did have problems. A car followed our taxi to the hotel, and from the window of our room where we could see armed men hiding in the bushes outside. Branch and the third journalist, Hilda Inclan, tried several times to call their old friend Morales and ask for his help.

At 5 A.M., a burly little man broke into our hotel room, grabbed our passports off the bureau, and began to holler like a boot-camp sergeant. Branch whined in plaintive disbelief, "Ricardo, is that you?" Branch had told me the stories of Morales turning on Bosch and Otero, but even this wary reporter had never imagined that the Monkey might do it to him. Yet it was obvious that the goons in the bushes longed to Morales. Morales pushed us out of the hotel room, refusing to acknowledge Branch's overtures of recognition.

We were driven to the airport by armed chauffeurs and held in a private office from nap until about 8 A.M., when Morales re-

turned to invite us to breakfast. Terrifying at 5, he was all charm at 8. We strolled casually down the crowded airport corridors to the dining room, but when Morales sensed that one of us might bolt for a nearby telephone, he stiffened and scowled, and this was enough to hold us back. At the breakfast table, he relaxed and told jokes and carried on a witty monologue about world affairs. Every time Branch marshaled the courage to ask Morales about our mistreatment, he would either pretend Branch was no longer sitting at the table, or else he would say: "I don't know anything about this Bosch you came to see. Is that his name? Maybe I have read it in the papers." Our involuntary departure from Caracas had a typical Morales result. We felt betrayed, yet we did not completely dislike the abuser. Perhaps he had protected us from darker forces. Like Otero and Bosch and half the Miami legal establishment, we had no idea whose side he was really on.

Narcs and finks

AFTER 1976, the anti-Castro business went into recession. Our hero returned from Venezuela to Miami, but instead of renewing his old connections, he was frequently seen at the Mutiny Bar with a new friend, Carlos Quesada. The Mutiny is to



The Miami Herald

Orlando Bosch, the rocket-launching pediatrician

the après-deal what Sardi's is to the après-theater, and Quesada was a familiar patron with a big bankroll and lizard-skin shoes. The tables are surrounded by wide-leaved plants and vernal waitresses in leotards. There are phone jacks at the tables so people can do business in these junglelike surroundings.

Quesada was an apolitical Cuban with an apolitical arrest record: 1969, violation of narcotics laws, three years probation; 1971, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, no action by state attorney; 1972, breaking and entering, disposition unknown; 1972, assault with intent to commit murder, victim didn't prosecute; 1974, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, case dismissed; 1977, breaking and entering, three years probation. The association between Quesada and Morales was considered a step up for Quesada, but a step down for Morales. The gossip around town was that the savvy Cuban who once traded secrets with Israeli and European spies was reduced to gossiping with silk-shirted drug punks. But genius can work with any raw material, and Morales found plenty of raw material at Quesada's \$100,000 stucco house at 1724 S.W. 16th Street. It is the standard one-story Miami residence, surrounded by a wall and decorated with security improvements. When Morales first entered the house in November 1977, police were already hiding outside and taking pictures.

Lt. Raul Diaz calls the visitors to the house on 16th Street "a convention of informants." Diaz should know. Fausto Villar, a familiar presence at Quesada's table, was talking privately to Lieutenant Diaz. Quesada himself was known to drop a hint or two to the police, and so was Francisco Tamayo. Franklin Sosa had cooperated with the DEA. José "Pepe 70" Gonzales was blabbing to another department. Rudy Rodriguez was talking to several departments, according to Lieutenant Diaz.

You might suppose, if you don't live in Miami, that drug smugglers operate in secrecy, and that police agencies operate in ignorance until they learn of the smugglers' activities and arrest them.

Actually, the system of the relations between government and industry in America's drug capital is more complex than that. Each of several local, state, and federal police agencies has its own informants, who inform on other informants, who undoubtedly are informing on them. The informants are also the smugglers. In return for their information, they are sometimes allowed to continue in business. So if you get enough informants in your network, like the diverse collection at Quesada's table, you are protected not by secrecy but by se-

lective prosecution. One can imagine that Ricardo Morales felt right at home in this new environment.

It's hard to fathom how the police decide when to take action and when to just listen. In this case, police say they were getting reports from two informants at Quesada's table—Fausto Villar and Pepe 70 Gonzales. Morales himself had introduced Villar to Sergeant Diaz some years earlier, and Diaz had introduced him to other officers. Now Villar wanted to tell on Quesada, possibly because he resented the feeling that Morales had usurped his position in the drug hierarchy. Pepe 70 was about to be sent to jail for selling a silencer to an undercover police officer. He was willing to tell on Quesada to secure a shorter sentence.

Pepe 70 was something of a sentencing expert. He got ten years for narcotics in Kansas in 1970, and—moving with remarkable speed—another ten years in California in 1971. Nevertheless, he was on the streets of Miami in 1977.

Leaks from Villar and Pepe 70 were the reported basis for a wiretap on Quesada's phone. Quesada changed the number four times between the summer of 1977 and the winter of 1978, which shows that smugglers are not completely indifferent to detection, even though a new number does not stop a wiretap. Quesada also made a half-hearted attempt to disguise his business through conceit, just in case somebody was listening. The most popular conceit was a fishing trip.

Police were not fooled by the following typical conversation between "C" (Quesada) and "W" (an associate).

C: *How are you doing, inspector?*

W: *I went fishing.*

C: *Yeah?*

W: *Yeah, and I arrived last night.*

C: *Ah, it doesn't matter. I went by there but I didn't see you.*

W: *We had an accident yesterday and we had to come back.*

C: *Ave Maria.*

W: *With Julito.*

C: *Yeah?*

W: *Yeah. Perforated his hand with a kingfish hook.*

C: *Who?*

W: *Julito.*

C: *There, at the kingfish store?*

W: *No, there fishing. Out there for kingfish.*

C: *Aha.*

W: *(Garbled)*

C: *Aha.*

W: *He perforated his hand with a big kingfish hook.*

C: *Ave Maria.*

IN THE SPRING of 1977, the police spent hundreds of hours recording and deciphering these Ave Marias and references to kingfish hooks. Morales tells us now that he completed a marijuana transaction out of the Quesada house in November 1977, and then didn't return to the house until late March 1978. The timing is very fortunate, because by March the police had already stacked up the tapes and gone out to arrest Quesada and Rudy Rodriguez and seven other people, seizing \$913,000 and fifty-six pounds of cocaine in the process. Assistant police chief Philip Boherty said it was "like winning the Super Bowl." But Morales wasn't even on the field. He and his friend Franklin Sosa both stayed away during the critical phase of evidence-gathering and were not implicated. How did Morales know when to stay away? Good question.

And why did Morales go back to Quesada's rented house after the bust? That one's easy to answer. This is the drug business. The best way to deal, in fact, is after the organization has been busted. The post-bust deal has a great chance of succeeding, because police have already completed their investigation. Besides that, money is needed to pay the lawyers, and perhaps to bail out some partners. As Morales later recollected to the police, he, Sosa, and Quesada (out on bail) were at Quesada's house, "and out of the blue sky, Franklin Sosa set up some sort of a connection with this guy Roberto who claimed he was going to give us 50,000 pounds." The Quesada group had momentarily tired of cocaine, since they had just stashed fifty-six pounds of it to police, so this 50,000 pounds refers to marijuana. Sosa used Quesada's phone, which he knew had been recently tapped, to make his arrangements.

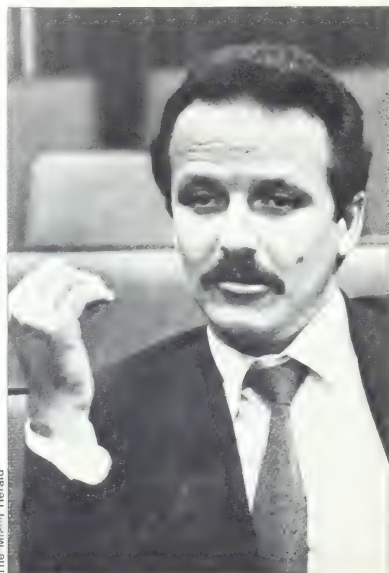
But police had not yet turned off the tape recorders, and they picked up the Sosa conversation as an epilogue to their surveillance. Officers were sent to the place where the bales of marijuana were to be loaded, and who did they find in the procession's lead car but Ricardo Morales. Sgt. Raul Diaz was dispatched to the scene and began intense discussions with the veteran informer. Meanwhile, the Monkey's car and person were searched. This turned up an illegally concealed weapon—as common as ketchup in many Miami glove compartments. More interesting was a membership card from the SIP, the Venezuelan secret police. Most interesting of all was a list of confidential radio frequencies from the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Coast Guard, the FBI, the Secret Service, the Florida Highway Patrol, and the Miami and Miami Shores police departments. Was Morales allied with all of them?

How did he get the list? "It baffles me," a DEA spokesman told the *Miami Herald*.

There was a difference of opinion among the various state and U.S. attorneys as to the Monkey's reliability. Sam Smargon, the prosecutor assigned to the case, argued that this ethereal defendant might vanish if allowed out of jail. "I wanted a high bond on this man because of his international contacts," Smargon says. At least one of Smargon's superiors, however, was called by the defense to vouch for the Monkey, even though Morales had not shown up at the Otero trial despite two promises to do so. There were still prosecutors willing to trust Morales. Smargon didn't and neither did the judge, who set bond at \$350,000. Later, Smargon also contracted Morales fever.

Word got out that Morales, from his jail cell, had figured out that Pepe 70 and Fausto Villar were the informants responsible for the Quesada wiretap. It may have been spontaneous deduction on his part, but he certainly had enough possible sources. In any event, Morales's perception was disturbing to both Villar and Pepe 70. In the words of Sergeant Diaz, they were "scared shitless." Villar was loose in Miami and Pepe 70 was stuck in an Indiana prison for the silencer. Both suddenly forgot that they had ever talked to police about Quesada, Quesada's house, illegal drugs, or Ricardo Morales. Actually, Villar did remem-

"Each of several police agencies has its own informants, who inform on other informants, who are informing on them."



The Miami Herald

Carlos Quesada in court

ber that Morales was a "valiant man," and said so to the *Miami Herald*.

THE FEE for defending a major drug case can be substantial. In Miami (as elsewhere), the prosecutor's office tends to be underpaid basic training for the other side. Morales was represented by Pollack, Spain & O'Donnell, a firm with some canny ex-prosecutors who had left the world of seeking convictions for the more lucrative one of seeking acquittals. (Even the defense world is not all sunshine. Pollack sits all day in crepuscular darkness with a shotgun propped behind his desk.) Morales's lawyers argued that if the informants had never discussed Quesada with police—as they now claimed—then police had no business using them as the basis for the wiretaps, and the wiretaps should be thrown out of court.

There were two police agencies involved in the Quesada bust, and they squabbled over some of the procedure, and the state attorney's office did not necessarily make the best moves, and the result was that the judge ruled for Morales: the wiretaps were stricken. The new stories told by the frightened Villar and Pepe 70 were given more judicial credence than their old ones, which were supported by tape recordings, sworn affidavits, and the word of at least five police officers.

The principal defendant was acquitted without ever taking the stand. Morales had spent a hundred days or so in jail awaiting the trial, but now (July 1978) he was free, and the two informants had been mortally terrified, and the police were humiliated, and the vanquished prosecutor, Sam Smargon, had suffered a coronary. Smargon says the heart attack was incidental to his judicial defeat, but he does remember that he felt great pressure. Perhaps he could have charged Morales with the concealed gun, in order to win at least something. By the end of the trial, it was too late for that, and besides, Smargon was getting Morales fever. "My respect for the man had increased tenfold," Smargon recalls. "He could have taken the stand and said any number of things, but he didn't. The man doesn't lie."

Morales went back to Quesada's house to develop more drug deals. "I was broke, you know," he confided in a later affidavit. "We started dealing right away." Rehabilitation is the judicial ideal, but the only apparent effect of Morales's encounter with the courts was to remind him of the advantages of cocaine. "Never in my life am I going to touch grass again," Morales declared. "It was getting on my nerves to see a house loaded with bales."

Things were looking up at the Quesada residence. Morales's legal moves had had a devastating side effect on the prosecutions of Quesada, Rodriguez, and the other defendants. Their cases were transferred from state court to a federal court. Prosecutors hoped that a fresh judge might accept the wiretap evidence. But a federal magistrate also rejected the wiretaps, and the prosecutors had no phone conversations to connect Quesada and friends to those fifty-six pounds of cocaine. U.S. attorney Jerry Sanford appealed the magistrate's ruling in a final and desperate effort to rescue the prosecution.

Jerry Sanford has entered this saga before. He was the prosecutor who lost the first Otero case after Morales failed to appear, and now he stood to lose the Quesada case because of Morales's machinations, and yet his friendship with Morales had strengthened. Sanford was a frequent visitor during Morales's time in jail, and his goal was to make Ricardo's stay more pleasant. "I would say, 'Ricardo, do you need anything?' or, 'Ricardo, do you want anything?' and he would always answer no," Sanford told me. After Morales was released, "We would bullshit about the KGB and the CIA, about who did this and who did that," Sanford insists. "I believe Ricardo Morales is one of the few people who never tried to use me."

One of Morales's abiding talents is to arrange things so that nobody ever feels completely defeated on his account. Perhaps he worried that prosecutors would blame him for the rejection of the wiretaps. Now he would give the prosecution a way out. "I remember we were walking down the hall," Sanford says. "It was just before a hearing on the wiretap appeal. Ricardo came up to me and said, 'What would you do if Quesada flipped?' I couldn't believe it." Morales was offering a spectacular cooperator, the second most important defendant in the case, behind Rudy Rodriguez.

Quesada was understandably eager to accept government immunity for all his crimes. He would have to testify against the other defendants, but he and Rodriguez had been feuding, anyway, and his Datsun 280 Z had been strafed with machine-gun bullets. Many believed that this attack came from Quesada's co-defendant, though others speculated that the machine-gun tattoo, which Quesada escaped from intact, may even have been arranged by Morales to give the flip some dramatic impetus. The government was eager to accept Quesada's cooperation, so the deal was approved in less than twenty-four hours. "Like a bolt out of the blue," said judge Sidney Aronovitz.

The wiretaps were finally admitted as evi-

ence, with Quesada to verify their authenticity, and all the other defendants were convicted. Rodriguez got fifteen years. He and the other convicts weren't happy, but everybody else seemed delighted with Morales's choreography. The prosecutors had won a major case. They talked as if Rodriguez was the hardened criminal they wanted to put away, while Quesada was just fluff that could blow back onto the streets for all they cared. The police were vindicated. The defense attorneys got a fat fee. Rudy Rodriguez got back \$50,000, half the money seized in the case. The IRS got the other half. Morales agreed to help the U.S. attorney's office by appearing in front of a couple of grand juries pondering their unsolved crimes.

Quesada was free but had a tax problem, having testified under immunity that he had made \$3 million in the drug business. Morales recommended a good lawyer to him. Guess who? Why, Jerry Sanford, who had gone into private practice following the Quesada conviction. Quesada also had a security problem, with Rodriguez threatening revenge, but the police department assigned him a bodyguard. Morales must have been gratified, with the agency that arrested Quesada now protecting him, and his former prosecutor now defending him, and nobody asking why a lesser de-

fendant hadn't been flipped instead of Quesada, and the troublesome Rodriguez legally detained so that Morales and Quesada could get back to business. It was the fall of 1978.

Operation Tick-Talks

IN DECEMBER 1980, an important law-enforcement conference was held in a police car in the parking lot of Monty Trainor's dockside bar, and then moved to the parking lot at Zayre's, and formally reconvened at a room in the Holiday Inn on LeJeune Road. Crime watcher Ricardo Morales was telling two policemen, D. C. Diaz and Raul Martinez (neither to be confused with Raul Diaz), and later the assistant state attorney, Rina Cohan, that drugs were bought and sold out of Carlos Quesada's house at 1724 S.W. 16th Street. Can you imagine? Police should do something about Quesada, Morales said. He and his partners were flirting with heroin, which tested Morales's moral patience. "Heroin . . . goes against, you know, my own belief and religion, and, you know, I . . . flatly refuse to go along in this new kind of business."

Morales was ready to give a fifty-page deposition. But first he reminded prosecutor Cohan that "I was found not guilty by the jury,

"One of Morales's abiding talents is to arrange things so that nobody ever feels completely defeated on his account."



The house at 1724 S. W. 16th St., Miami, Florida.

John Rothchild
THE
INFORMANT

which you should be aware of," for earlier suspicious acts. All Morales wanted now was immunity for subsequent suspicious acts. In return, he would incriminate Quesada and many others. The same kind of immunity that Quesada got for incriminating Rudy Rodriguez back in 1979. Sgt. Raul Martinez helped Morales in his negotiations:

Sgt. Martinez: *He will not be prosecuted for anything he did with... any of his co-conspirators?*

Ms. Cohan: *Correct. Includes Quesada...*

Morales: *Includes the whole organization. The whole family?*

Ms. Cohan: *That's correct.*

Morales: *I won't be prosecuted?*

Ms. Cohan: *No.*

Sgt. Martinez: *If all of a sudden you say in 1980 you murdered Juan Pepe...*

Ms. Cohan: *That's another story entirely.*

Sgt. Martinez: *That's what she is saying.*

Morales: *I didn't.*

Sgt. Martinez: *So you have to restrict yourself to the conspiracy.*

Morales: *To my activities, right? To my activities in the drug business, you know, for the past three years, right?*

Morales's revelations were not shocking. D. C. Diaz was the man assigned to be Quesada's bodyguard after Morales arranged Quesada's flip. To stay close enough to Quesada to shield him, you had to drink with him, and D. C. Diaz had done that, both at Quesada's house and at the Mutiny Bar. In fact, on different nights during the summer of 1980, you could have found either D. C. Diaz, or Raul Diaz, or ex-prosecutor Jerry Sanford, or a customs agent named Czukas sitting at the same table with Carlos Quesada and his new associates.

Chief among these associates was Rafael Villaverde, ex-CIA, a Bay of Pigs alumnus who was ransomed by President Kennedy for medicine and truck parts, a man who moved up from picking tomatoes to operating a \$2 million antipoverty agency for the Latin elderly. Villaverde, weighing more than 200 pounds, knows the mayor, knows the police, knows everybody he ought to know in Miami. Villaverde's welfare agency has been called a front for terrorists, but Villaverde once said that if bombers and assassins did congregate among his elderly, it was only to apply for benefits in anticipation of their retirement.

Other frequenters of Quesada's table at the Mutiny were Villaverde's brother, Raul, and the two Condom brothers, who share an unfortunate name, a conviction for cocaine smuggling, and membership in the paramilitary 2506 Brigade, a venerable anti-Castro group. Morales was often at the Mutiny, too. He had

introduced Quesada to Sanford, and Quesada in turn introduced D. C. Diaz to the Condom brothers, who were brought into the group by the Villaverdes, who were themselves introduced to Quesada by Morales. For the Monkey, the Mutiny gatherings in that summer of 1980 were "This Is Your Life."

Everybody knew what everybody else was up to. Policeman D. C. Diaz told me, "Quesada knew where we were coming from. And he would give us information about drugs, usually things we already knew; or else he would tell stories on his competition. We would visit his house, and if there was something going on that he didn't want us to see, he would come outside and talk. He even tried to bribe us with Rolex watches." For more than a year, police had viewed Quesada and partners with suspicion and at close range, and yet nothing had broken. Perhaps they were waiting for Morales to make a move.

But tensions surfaced occasionally. Jerry Sanford recalls one night at the Mutiny when "Morales kept saying that so-and-so killed the Chilean ambassador in Washington, and Villaverde kept saying he knew it was somebody else, and Morales started throwing pats of butter at Villaverde. Every time he made a point he hurled a pat. Villaverde tried to ignore this and so did Quesada. They just sat there and pretended it wasn't happening."

By later October, relations had broken down—not between the suspects and the police, but among the suspects. *The Godfather* was on television again ("when *The Godfather* comes on... the drug people, they get steamed up somehow, and some people have gotten killed because of that," Morales opines), and Morales didn't get an invitation to customs agent Czukas's birthday party, which upset him. In fact, Morales recalls, it was a lousy month. He claims to have spent several hours one evening fending off various hit men. He says he escaped by brandishing a dummy hand grenade. "I pulled the handle and said 'trick or treat'... so that was my Halloween."

SO BY the first week in December, Morales was sitting in the parking lot with the police, restructuring his alliances once again. One theory is that he had been kicked out of the Quesada organization and was retaliating. Jerry Sanford's theory is that the Condom brothers had proposed a legitimate stock deal to Quesada and that Morales mistakenly assumed that "stocks" meant heroin, since none of his friends read the *Wall Street Journal*. The Villaverde brothers, now indicted, said Morales first introduced them to

Quesada and then created this drug investigation, in retaliation for something the Villaverdes did back in 1976. They thought they had a contract with the CIA to assassinate a European terrorist named Carlos the Jackal. When they discovered (such is life in the underworld) that the target was a Libyan dissident and the client was Colonel Qaddafi, they patriotically backed out. Morales was also somehow involved. Villaverde has contended.

Once again, the law enforcement people went along with Morales. "We don't have the money to buy information, and so we have to work on favors," says Lt. Raul Diaz. "There are certain things you can do for some people and then they owe you a favor. That is the system. Sometimes, it breeds what looks like corruption." The state gave Morales his immunity and then used his testimony for wiretap applications, first on a suspected lesser distributor named Roberto Ortega and then on Quesada's phone and behind the wall clock in Quesada's living room. This was Operation Tick-Talks. Police listened to hundreds of hours of conversation through the spring of 1981, but then the clock fell off the wall and he bug was discovered, so they had to move in to arrest an assortment of schoolteachers, airline pilots, and accountants, plus the Villaverde brothers and the Condoms and Quesada, taking forty-eight people in all. They have been charged with conspiracy to distribute cocaine, although no drugs were seized.

Much ingenuity went into the Tick-Talks surveillance. Police detained the caretaker of the Quesada house on a minor traffic charge so that they could make a copy of the house key in his pocket, which gave them entry so they could install the wall bug. The way they came back to change the setting for daylight saving time was very clever. But letting Ricardo Morales chart the course of a criminal prosecution is bound to create a few complications.

For example, Sam Smargon, the state attorney who tried to keep Morales from getting bail when he was caught with the marijuana, and then lost the marijuana case, has moved over to the U.S. attorney's office, which Jerry Sanford vacated to go into private practice. Just before the recent flip, Morales requested that Smargon put him in the federal witness protection program. This program is for people who are helping the Feds, and Tick-Talks is a state matter. Morales had agreed to testify in a federal tax case against a reputed drug smuggler. But that case came and went without Morales testifying. It seems more likely that Morales entered the federal witness protection program because he wanted to, for

reasons having nothing to do with the tax case. Morales has been out of the federal program since July, but is continuing a witness protection program of his own by remaining out of sight of the U.S. marshals. Nobody will tell me where he is to this day.

Jerry Sanford, who was stood up by Morales in the Otero case and then flipped Quesada and later became Quesada's attorney, both on Morales's suggestion, signed on to defend Quesada against charges originated by Morales in Operation Tick-Talks. Sanford also sent Morales's request for federal protection to his friend Sam Smargon. Recently, Sanford simplified his life by stepping aside as Quesada's attorney. The last time I saw Sanford, he looked both relieved and tired.

The government couldn't get Morales to cooperate in the Otero case, and then lost the marijuana case against him because the wiretaps were thrown out and the informants were unreliable, and now it is going to try forty-eight new defendants in the belief that Morales will cooperate and the wiretaps will hold up. It has remarkable faith, and no physical evidence. Drugs were not confiscated in Tick-Talks, and the recorded dialogues between the suspected conspirators are much more befuddling than the old fish-hook exchanges on the previous go-round. The literal translations make it sound like the Villaverdes and Quesada were either milking cows, planting rose bushes, or collecting bazookas. Could they possibly not have known that they were being taped, given all the lively barter of information in this town and the fact that Morales himself had disappeared?

IT IS NOW fall in Miami, and the heat has left the pavement. The only major character in any of the Morales episodes currently in prison is Orlando Bosch. He is still being held in Venezuela, even though he was acquitted there. Venezuela has a different system of justice. Rolando Otero is out on bond, and so is Carlos Quesada, and so are the Villaverdes. Rudy Rodriguez, the man they wanted to convict so badly that they flipped Morales and Quesada, spent about a year in jail awaiting his appeal because he couldn't make the bond of \$1 million. Recently, however, the government changed its mind and agreed to let him use some property he owned as collateral for his bond, so Rodriguez is free again. Naturally, there is a rumor around Miami about why the government let him out: Rodriguez has been flipped, and now he's an informant, too. The rumor doesn't say who is left to inform on. □

"There are certain things you can do for some people and then they owe you a favor. That is the system. Sometimes, it breeds what looks like corruption."

MY WAR

How I got irony in the infantry

by Paul Fussell

OVER THE PAST few years I find I've written a great deal about war, which is odd because I'm supposed to be a professor of English literature. And I find I've given the Second World War a uniformly bad press, rejecting all attempts to depict it as a sensible proceeding or to mitigate its cruelty and swinishness. I have rubbed readers' noses in some very noisome materials—corpses, maddened dogs, deserters and looters, pain, Auschwitz, weeping, scandal, cowardice, mistakes and defeats, sadism, hangings, horrible wounds, fear and panic. Whenever I deliver this unhappy view of the war, especially when I try to pass it through a protective screen of irony, I hear from outraged readers. Speaking of some ironic aesthetic observations I once made on a photograph of a mangled sailor on his ruined gunmount, for example, a woman from Brooklyn found me “callous,” and accused me of an “overwhelming deficiency in human compassion.” Another reader, who I suspect has had as little empirical contact with the actualities of war face to face as the correspondent from Brooklyn, found the same essay “black and monstrous” and concluded that the magazine publishing it (*Harper's*, actually) “disgraced itself.”

How did I pick up this dark, ironical, flip view of the war? Why do I enjoy exhibiting it? The answer is that I contracted it in the

infantry. Even when I write professionally about Walt Whitman or Samuel Johnson about the theory of comparative literature or the problems facing the literary biographer, the voice that's audible is that of the pissed off infantryman, disguised as a literary and cultural commentator. He is embittered that the Air Corps had beds to sleep in, that Patton's Third Army got all the credit, that non-combatants of the Medical Administrative and Quartermaster Corps wore the same battle stars as he, that soon after the war the “enemy” he had labored to destroy had been rearmed by his own government and positioned to oppose one of his old allies. “We broke our ass for nothin’,” says Sergeant Croft in *The Naked and the Dead*. These are this speaker's residual complaints while he is affecting to be annoyed primarily by someone's bad writing or slipshod logic or lazy editing or pretentious ideas. A Louis Simpson says, “The war made me a foot-soldier for the rest of my life,” and after any war foot soldiers are touchy.

MY WAR is virtually synonymous with my life. I entered the war when I was nineteen, and I have been in it ever since. Melville's Ishmael says that a whale ship was his Yale College and his Harvard. An infantry division was mine

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W. Eugene Smith, *Life Magazine* 1945 Time Inc.

the 103rd, whose dispirited personnel wore a colorful green-and-yellow cactus on their left shoulders. These hillbillies and Okies, drop-outs and used-car salesmen and petty criminals were my teachers and friends.

How did an upper-middle-class young gentleman find himself in so unseemly a place? Why wasn't he in the Navy, at least, or in the OSS or Air Corps administration or editing *Stars and Stripes* or being a general's aide? The answer is comic: at the age of twenty I found myself leading forty riflemen over the Vosges Mountains and watching them being torn apart by German artillery and machine guns because when I was sixteen, in junior college, I was fat and flabby, with feminine tits and a big behind. For years the thing I'd hated most about school was gym, for there I was obliged to strip and shower communally. Thus I chose to join the ROTC (infantry, as it happened) because that was a way to get out of gym, which meant you never had to take off your clothes and invite—indeed, compel—ridicule. You rationalized by noting that this was 1939 and that a little "military training" might not, in the long run, be wasted. Besides, if you worked up to be a cadet officer, you got to wear a Sam Browne belt, from which depended a nifty saber.

When I went on to college, it was natural to continue my technique for not exposing my naked person, and luckily my college had an infantry ROTC unit, where I was welcomed as something of an experienced hand. This was in 1941. When the war began for the United States, college students were solicited by various "programs" of the Navy and Marine Corps and Coast Guard with plans for transforming them into officers. But people enrolled in the ROTC unit were felt to have committed themselves already. They had opted for the infantry, most of them all unaware, and that's where they were going to stay. Thus, while shrewder friends were enrolling in Navy V-1 or signing up for the pacific exercises of the Naval Japanese Language Program or the Air Corps Meteorological Program, I signed up for the Infantry Enlisted Reserve Corps, an act guaranteeing me one extra semester in college before I was called. After basic training, advancement to officer training was promised, and that seemed a desirable thing, even if the crossed rifles on the collar did seem to betoken some hard physical exertion and discomfort—marching, sleeping outdoors, that sort of thing. But it would help "build you up," and besides, officers, even in the infantry, got to wear those wonderful pink trousers and receive constant salutes.

It was such imagery of future grandeur that in spring 1943, sustained me through eighteen weeks of basic training in hundred-degree heat at dreary Camp Roberts, California, where, to toughen us—it was said—water was forbidden from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. ("water discipline," this was called). Within a few weeks I'd lost all my flab and with it the whole ironic "reason" I found myself there at all. It was abundantly clear already that "infantry" had been a big mistake: it was not just stupid and boring and bloody, it was athletic, and thus not at all for me. But supported by vanity and pride I somehow managed to march thirty-five miles and tumble through the obstacle course, and a few months later I found myself at the Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia, where, training to become an officer, I went through virtually the same thing over again.

As a second lieutenant of infantry I "graduated" in the spring of 1944 and was assigned to the 103rd Division at Camp Howze, Texas, the local equivalent of Camp Roberts, only worse: Roberts had white-painted two-story clapboard barracks, Howze, one-story tarpaper shacks. But the heat was the same, and the boredom, and the local whore culture, and the hillbilly songs:

*Who's that gal with the red dress on?
Some folks call her Dinah.
She stole my heart away,
Down in Carolina.*

The 103rd Division had never been overseas and all the time I was putting my rifle platoon through its futile exercises we were being prepared for the invasion of southern France which followed the landings in Normandy. Of course we didn't know this, and assumed from the training ("water discipline" again) that we were destined for the South Pacific. There were some exercises involving towed glider that seemed to portend nothing but self-immolation, we were so inept with these devices. In October 1944, we were all conveyed by troop transports to Marseilles.

Irrational combat

IT WAS MY FIRST experience of abroad, and my lifelong affair with France dates from the moment I first experienced such un-American phenomena as: formal manner and a respect for the language; a well-founded skepticism; the pollarded plane trees on the Avenue R. Schumann; the red wine and bread; the *pissoirs* in the streets; the international traffic signs and the visual publi-

language hinting at a special French understanding of things—*Hôtel de Ville, Défense d'officier*; the smell of Turkish tobacco when one has been brought up on Virginia and burley. An intimation of what we might be opposing was supplied by the aluminum Vichy coinage. On one side, a fasces and *État Français*. No more Republic. On the other, *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité* replaced by *Travail* (as in *Arbeit Macht Frei*), *Famille*, and *Patrie* (as in *Vaterland*). But before we had time to contemplate all this, we were moving rapidly northeast. After a truck ride up the Rhône valley, still pleasant with girls and flowers and wine, our civilized period came to an abrupt end. On the night of November 11 (nice irony there) we were introduced into the line at St. Dié, in Alsace.

We were in "combat." I find the word embarrassing, carrying as it does false chivalric overtones (as in "single combat"). But synonyms are worse: "fighting" is not accurate, because much of the time you are being shelled, which is not fighting but suffering; "battle" is too high and remote; "in action" is a euphemism suited more to dire telegrams than description. "Combat" will have to do, and my first hours of it I recall daily, even now. They fueled, and they still fuel, my view of things.

Everyone knows that a night relief is among the most difficult of infantry maneuvers. But we didn't know it, and in our innocence we expected it to go according to plan. We and the company we were replacing were cleverly and cleverly shelled; it was as if the Germans a few hundred feet away could see us in the dark and through the thick pine growth. When the shelling finally stopped, at about midnight, we realized that although near the place we were supposed to be, until daylight we were hopelessly lost. The order came down to stop where we were, lie down among the trees, and get some sleep. We would finish the relief at first light. Scattered over several hundred yards, the 250 of us in F Company lay down in a darkness so thick we could see nothing at all. Despite the terror of our first shelling (and several people had been hit), we slept as soundly as babes. At dawn I awoke, and what I saw all around were numerous objects I'd miraculously not tripped over in the dark. These objects were dozens of dead German boys in greenish-gray uniforms, killed a day or two before by the company we were relieving. If darkness had hidden them from us, dawn disclosed them with open eyes and greenish-white faces like marble, still clutching their rifles and machine pistols in their seventeen-year-old hands, fixed where they had fallen. (For

the first time I understood the German phrase for the war dead: *die Gefallenen*.) Michelangelo could have made something beautiful out of these forms, in the Dying Gaul tradition, and I was startled to find that at first, in a way I couldn't understand, they struck me as beautiful. But after a moment, no feeling but shock and horror. My adolescent illusions, largely intact to that moment, fell away all at once, and I suddenly knew I was not and never would be in a world that was reasonable or just. The scene was less apocalyptic than shabbily ironic: it sorted so ill with modern popular assumptions about the idea of progress and attendant improvements in public health, social welfare, and social justice. To transform guiltless boys into cold marble after passing them through unbearable fear and humiliation and pain and contempt seemed to do them an interesting injustice. I decided to ponder these things. In 1917, shocked by the Battle of the Somme and recovering from neurasthenia, Wilfred Owen was reading a life of Tennyson. He wrote his mother: "Tennyson, it seems, was always a great child. So should I have been, but for Baumont Hamel." So should I have been, but for St. Dié.

After that, one day was much like another: attack at dawn, run and fall and crawl and sweat and worry and shoot and be shot at and cower from mortar shells, always keeping up a jaunty carriage in front of one's platoon; and at night, "consolidate" the objective, usually another hill, sometimes a small town, and plan the attack for the next morning. Before we knew it we'd lost half the company, and we all realized then that for us there would be no way out until the war ended but sickness, wounds, or oblivion. And the war would end only as we pressed our painful daily advance. Getting it over was our sole motive. Yes, we knew about the Jews. But our skins seemed to us more valuable at the time.

THE WORD for the German defense all along was "clever," a word that never could have been applied to our procedures. It was my first experience, to be repeated many times in later years, of the cunning ways of Europe versus the blunter ways of the New World. Although manned largely by tired thirty-year-old veterans (but sharp enough to have gotten out of Normandy alive), old men, and crazy youths, the German infantry was officered superbly, and their defense, which we experienced for many months, was disciplined and orderly. My people would have run, or at least "snaked off." But the Germans didn't, until the very end. Their uniforms

"I suddenly knew I was not and never would be in a world that was reasonable or just."

were a scandal—rags and beat-up boots and unauthorized articles—but somehow they held together. Nazis or not, they did themselves credit. Lacking our lavish means, they compensated by patience and shrewdness. It was not until well after the war that I discovered that many times when they unaccountably located us hidden in deep woods and shelled us accurately, they had done so by inferring electronically the precise positions of the radios over which we innocently conversed.

As the war went on, the destruction of people became its sole means. I felt sorry for the Germans I saw killed in quantity everywhere—along the roads, in cellars, on rooftops—for many reasons. They were losing, for one thing, and their deaths meant nothing, though they had been persuaded that resistance might “win the war.” And they were so pitifully dressed and accoutered: that was touching. Boys with raggedy ad hoc uniforms and Panzerfausts and too few comrades. What were they doing? They were killing themselves; and for me, who couldn’t imagine being killed, for people my age voluntarily to get themselves killed caused my mouth to drop open.

Irony describes the emotion, whatever it is, occasioned by perceiving some great gulf, half-comic, half-tragic, between what one expects and what one finds. It’s not quite “disillusion,” but it’s adjacent to it. My experience in the war was ironic because my previous innocence had prepared me to encounter in it something like the same reasonableness that governed prewar life. This, after all, was the tone dominating the American relation to the war: talk of “the future,” allotments and bond purchases carefully sent home, hopeful fantasies of the “postwar world.” I assumed, in short, that everyone would behave according to the clear advantages offered by reason. I had assumed that in war, like chess, when you were beaten you “resigned”; that when outnumbered and outgunned you retreated; that when you were surrounded you surrendered. I found out differently, and with a vengeance. What I found was people obeying fatuous and murderous “orders” for no reason I could understand, killing themselves because someone “told them to,” prolonging the war when it was hopelessly lost because—because it was unreasonable to do so. It was my introduction to the shakiness of civilization. It was my first experience of the profoundly irrational element, and it made ridiculous all talk of plans and preparations for the future and goodwill and intelligent arrangements. Why did the red-haired young German machine-gunner firing at us in the woods not go on living—marrying, going to university, going to the beach,

laughing, smiling—but keep firing long after he had made his point, and so require us to kill him with a grenade?

BEFORE we knew it it was winter, and the winter in 1944–1945 was the coldest in Europe for twenty-five years. For the ground troops conditions were unspeakable, and even the official history admits the disaster, imputing the failure to provide adequate winter clothing—analogous to the similar German oversight when the Russian winter of 1941–1942 surprised the planners—to optimism, innocence, and “confidence”:

Confidence born of the rapid sweep across Europe in the summer of 1944 and the conviction on the part of many that the successes of Allied arms would be rewarded by victory before the onset of winter contributed to the unpreparedness for winter combat.

The result was 64,008 casualties from “cold injury”—not wounds but pneumonia and trench foot. The official history sums up: “This constitutes more than four 15,000-man divisions. Approximately 90 percent of cold casualties involved riflemen and there were about 4,000 riflemen per infantry division. Thus closer to thirteen divisions were critically disabled for combat.” We can appreciate those figures by recalling that the invasion of Normandy was initially accomplished by only six divisions (nine if we add the airborne). Thus crucial were little things like decent mittens and gloves, fur-lined parkas, thermal underwear—all of which any normal peacetime hiker or skier would demand as protection against prolonged exposure. But “the winter campaign in Europe was fought by most combat personnel in a uniform that did not give proper protection”: we wore silly long overcoats, right out of the nineteenth century; thin field jackets, designed to convey an image of manliness at Fort Bragg; and wool dress trousers. We wore the same shirts and huddled under the same blankets as Pershing’s troops in the expedition against Pancho Villa in 1916. Of the 64,008 who suffered “cold injury” I was one. During February 1945, I was back in various hospitals for a month with pneumonia. I told my parents it was flu.

That month away from the line helped me survive for four weeks more but it broke the rhythm and, never badly scared before, when I returned to the line early in March I found for the first time that I was terrified, unwilling to take the chances that before had seemed rather sporting. My month of safety had re-

ewed my interest in survival, and I was psychologically and morally ill prepared to lead my platoon in the great Seventh Army attack of March 15, 1945. But lead it I did, or rather push it, staying as far in the rear as was barely decent. And before the day was over I had been severely rebuked by a sharp-eyed eutenant-colonel who threatened court martial if I didn't pull myself together. Before that day was over I was sprayed with the contents of a soldier's torso when I was lying behind him and he knelt to fire at a machine gun holding us up: he was struck in the heart, and out of the holes in the back of his field jacket flew little clouds of tissue, blood, and powdered cloth. Near him another man raised himself to fire, but the machine gun caught him in the mouth, and as he fell he looked back at me with surprise, blood and teeth ribbling out onto the leaves. He was one to whom early on I had given the Silver Star for heroism, and he didn't want to let me down.

As if in retribution for my cowardice, in the late afternoon, near Ingwiller, Alsace, clearing a woods full of Germans cleverly dug in, my platoon was raked by shells from an 88, and I was hit in the back and leg by shell fragments. They felt like red-hot knives going in, but I was as interested in the few quiet moments, like those of a hurt child drifting off to sleep, of my thirty-seven-year-old platoon sergeant—we'd been together since Camp Bowie—killed instantly by the same shell. We were lying together, and his immediate neighbor on the other side, a lieutenant in charge of a section of heavy machine guns, was killed instantly too. My platoon was virtually wiped away. I was in disgrace, I was hurt, I was early expendable—while I lay there the supply sergeant removed my issue wristwatch to pass on to my replacement—and I was twenty years old.

[B]ORE UP all right while being removed from "the field" and passed back through the first-aid stations where I was known. I was deeply on morphine, and managed to have smiles as called for. But when I got to an evacuation hospital thirty miles behind the lines and was coming out of the anesthetic from my first operation, all my affections of control collapsed, and I did what I'd wanted to do for months. I cried, noisily and publicly, for hours. I was the scandal of the war. There were lots of tears back there: in the operating room I saw a nurse dissolve in shoulder-shaking sobs when a boy died with great errorous gasps on the operating table she was tending. That was the first time I'd seen

anyone cry in the whole European theater of operations, and I must have cried because I felt that there, out of "combat," tears were licensed. I was crying because I was ashamed and because I'd let my men be killed and because my sergeant had been killed and because I recognized as never before that he might have been me and that statistically if in no other way he was me, and that I had been killed too. But ironically I had saved my life by almost losing it, for my leg wound providentially became infected, and by the time it was healed and I was ready for duty again, the European war was over, and I journeyed back up through a silent Germany to rejoin my reconstituted platoon "occupying" a lovely Tyrolean valley near Innsbruck. For the infantry there was still the Japanese war to sweat out, and I was destined for it, despite the dramatic gash in my leg. But, thank God, the Bomb was dropped while I was on my way there, with the result that I can write this.

That day in mid-March that ended me was the worst of all for F Company. We knew it was going to be bad when it began at dawn, just like an episode from the First World War, with an hour-long artillery preparation and a smokescreen for us to attack through. What got us going and carried us through was the conviction that, suffer as we might, we were at least "making history." But we didn't even do that. Liddell-Hart's 766-page *History of the Second World War* never heard of us. It mentions neither March 15 nor the 103rd Infantry Division. The only satisfaction history has offered is the evidence that we caused Josef Goebbels some extra anxiety. The day after our attack he entered in his log under "Military Situation":

In the West the enemy has now gone over to the attack in the sector between Saarbrücken and Hagenau in addition to the previous flashpoints. . . . His objective is undoubtedly to drive in our front on the Saar and capture the entire region south of the Moselle and west of the Rhine.

And he goes on satisfyingly: "Mail received testifies to a deep-seated lethargy throughout the German people degenerating almost into hopelessness. There is very sharp criticism of the . . . entire national leadership." One reason: "The Moselle front is giving way." But a person my age whom I met thirty years later couldn't believe that there was still any infantry fighting in France in the spring of 1945, and, puzzled by my dedicating a book of mine to my dead platoon sergeant with the date March 15, 1945, confessed that he couldn't figure out what had happened to him.

"What got us going and carried us through was the conviction that we were making history. But we didn't even do that."

TO BECOME disillusioned you must earlier have been illusioned. Evidence of the illusions suffered by the youth I was is sadly available in the letters he sent, in unbelievable profusion, to his parents. They radiate a terrible naïveté, together with a pathetic disposition to be pleased in the face of boredom and, finally, horror. The young man had heard a lot about the importance of "morale" and ceaselessly labored to sustain his own by sustaining his addressees'. Thus: "We spent all of Saturday on motor maintenance," he writes from Fort Benning; "a very interesting subject." At Benning he believes all he's told and fails to perceive that he's being prepared for one thing only, and that a nasty, hazardous job, whose performers on the line have a life expectancy of six weeks. He assures his parents: "I can get all sorts of assignments from here: . . . battalion staff officer, mess officer, rifle-platoon leader, weapons-platoon leader, company executive officer, communications officer, motor officer, etc." (Was it an instinct for protecting himself from a truth half-sensed that made him bury *rifle-platoon leader* in the middle of this list?) Like a bright schoolboy, he is pleased when grown-ups tell him he's done well. "I got a compliment on my clean rifle tonight. The lieutenant said, 'Very good.' I said, 'Thank you, sir.'" His satisfaction in making Expert Rifleman is touching; it is "the highest possible rating," he announces. And although he is constantly jokey, always on the lookout for what he terms "laffs," he seems to have no sense of humor:

We're having a very interesting week . . . taking up the carbine, automatic rifle, rifle grenade, and the famous "bazooka." We had the bazooka today, and it was very enjoyable, although we could not fire it because of lack of ammunition.

He has the most impossible standards of military excellence, and he enlists his critical impulse in the service of optimistic self-deception. Appalled by the ineptitude of the 103rd Division in training, he writes: "As I told you last time, this is a very messed up division. It will never go overseas as a unit, and is now serving mainly as a replacement training center, disguised as a combat division."

Because the image of himself actually leading troops through bullets and shellfire is secretly unthinkable, fatuous hope easily comes to his assistance. In August 1944, with his division preparing to ship abroad, he asserts that the Germans seem to be "on their last legs." Indeed, he reports, "bets are being made . . . that the European war will be over in six weeks." But October finds him on the

transport heading for the incredible, and now he "expects," he says, that "this war will end some time in November or December," adding, "I feel very confident and safe." After the epiphanies of the line in November and December, he still entertains hopes for an early end, for the Germans are rational people and what rational people would persist in immolating themselves once it's clear that they've lost the war? "This *can't* last much longer," he finds.

The letters written during combat are full of requests for food packages from home, and interpretation of this obsession is not quite as simple as it seems. The C and K rations were tedious, to be sure, and as readers of *All Quiet on the Western Front* and *The Middle Parts of Fortune* know, soldiers of all times and places are fixated on food. But how explain this young man's requests for "fantastic items like gherkins, olives, candy-coated peanut (the kind "we used to get out of slot-machine at the beach"), cans of chili and tamales, cashew nuts, deviled ham, and fig pudding? The lust for a little swank is the explanation, I think, the need for some exotic counterweight to the uniformity, the dullness, the lack of point and distinction he sensed everywhere. These items also asserted an unbroken contact with home, and a home defined as the sort of place fertile not in corned-beef hash and meat-and-vegetable stew but gum drops and canned chicken. In short, an upper-middle-class venue.

Upper middle class too, I suspect, is the unimagined cruelty of some of these letters: clear evidence of arrested emotional development. "Period" anti-Semitic remarks are not infrequent, and they remain unrebuked by any of his addressees. His understanding of the American South (he's writing from Georgia) can be gauged from his remark "Everybody down here is illiterate." In combat some of his bravado is a device necessary to his emotional survival, but some bespeaks a genuine insensitivity:

Feb. 1, 1945

Dear Mother and Dad:

Today is the division's 84th consecutive day on line. The average is 90-100 days, although one division went 136 without being relieved. . . .

This house we're staying in used to be the headquarters of a local German Motor Corps unit, and it's full of printed matter, uniforms, propaganda, and pictures of Der Führer. I am not collecting any souvenirs [sic], although I have had ample opportunity to pick up helmets, flags, weapons, etc. The only thing I have kept is a Belgian pistol, which one German was carrying who was unfortunate enough to walk right into

my platoon. That is the first one I had the job of shooting. I have kept the pistol as a souvenir of my first Kraut.

It is odd how hard one becomes after a little bit of this stuff, but it gets to be more like killing mad dogs than people....

Love to all,
Paul

THE ONLY comfort I can take today in contemplating these letters is the ease with which their author can be rationalized as a stranger. Even the handwriting is not now my own. There are constant shows of dutifulness to parents, and even grandparents, and mentions of churchgoing, rarely anomalous in a leader of assault troops. Parental approval is indispensable: "This week I was 'Class A Agent Officer' for Co. F, earning a \$6000 payroll without losing a cent! I felt very proud of myself!" And the complacency! The twittiness! From the hospital, where for a time he's been in an enlisted men's ward: "Sometimes I enjoy being with the men just as much as associating with the officers." (*Associating* is good.) The letter-writer is more reticent than literate ("Alright," "thank's," "curiously"), and his taste is terrible. He is rilled to read Bruce Barton's *The Man Nobody Knows* ("It presents Christ in a very human light"), Maugham's *The Summing Up*, and the short stories of Erskine Caldwell. Even his often-sketched fantasies of the postwar haven are grimly conventional: he will get married (to whom?); he will buy a thirty-five-foot sloop and live on it; he will take a year of nonserious literary graduate study at Columbia; he will edit a magazine for yachtsmen. He seems unable to perceive what is happening, constantly telling his addressee what *ill* please rather than what he feels. He was never more mistaken than when he assured his parents while recovering from his wounds, "Please try not to worry, as no permanent image has been done."

But the shock of these wounds and the long period recovering from them seem to have affected him a tiny bit, and some of his last letters from the hospital suggest that one or two scales are beginning to fall from his eyes:

One of the most amazing things about this war is the way the bizarre and unnatural become the normal after a short time. Take this hospital and its atmosphere: after a long talk with him, an eighteen-year-old boy without legs seems like the normal eighteen-year-old. You might even be surprised if a boy of the same age should walk in on both his legs. He would seem the

freak and the object of pity. It is easy to imagine, after seeing some of these men, that all young men are arriving on this planet with stumps instead of limbs.

The same holds true with life at the front. The same horrible unrealness that is so hard to describe.... I think I'll have to write a book about all this sometime.

But even here, he can't conclude without reverting to cliché and twerpy optimism:

Enough for this morning. I'm feeling well and I'm very comfortable, and the food is improving. We had chicken and ice cream yesterday!

He has not read Swift yet, but in the vision of the young men with their stumps there's perhaps a hint that he's going to. And indeed, when he enrolled in graduate school later, the first course he was attracted to was on Swift and Pope. And ever since he's been trying to understand satire, and even to experiment with it himself.

It was in the army that I discovered my calling. I hadn't known that I was a teacher, but I found I could explain things: the operation of flamethrowers, map-reading, small-arms firing, "field sanitation." I found I could "lecture" and organize and make things clear. I could start at the beginning of a topic and lead an audience to the end. When the war was over, being trained for nothing useful, I naturally fell into the course that would require largely a mere continuation of this act. In becoming a college teacher of literature I was aware of lots of company: thousands of veterans swarmed to graduate schools to study literature, persuaded that poetry and prose could save the world, or at least help wash away some of the intellectual shame of the years we'd been through. From this generation came John Berryman and Randall Jarrell and Delmore Schwartz and Saul Bellow and Louis Simpson and Richard Wilbur and William Meredith and all the others who, afire with the precepts of the New Criticism, embraced literature, and the teaching of it, as quasi-religious obligation.

THIS DAY I tend to think of all hierarchies, especially the academic one, as military. The undergraduate students, at the "bottom," are the recruits and draftees, privates all. Teaching assistants and graduate students are the non-coms, with grades (only officers have "ranks") varying according to seniority: a G-4 is more important than a G-1, etc. Instructors, where they still exist, are the second and first lieutenants.

"To become disillusioned you must earlier have been illuded."

tenants, and together with the assistant professors (captains) make up the company-grade officers. When we move up to the tenured ranks, associate professors answer to field-grade officers, majors and colonels. Professors are generals, beginning with brigadier—that's a newly promoted one. Most are major-generals, and upon retirement they will be advanced to lieutenant-general ("professor emeritus"). The main academic administration is less like a higher authority in the same structure than an adjacent echelon, like a group of powerful congressmen, for example, or people from the judge advocate's or inspector general's departments. The board of trustees, empowered to make professorial appointments and thus confer academic ranks and privileges, is the equivalent of the president of the United States, who signs commissions very like letters of academic appointment: "Reposing special trust and confidence in the . . . abilities of ———, I do appoint him," etc. It is not hard to see also that the military principle crudely registered in the axiom "rank has its privileges" operates in academic life, where there are such plums to be plucked as frequent leaves of absence, single-occupant offices, light teaching loads, and convenient, all-weather parking spaces.

I think this generally unconscious way of conceiving of the academic hierarchy is common among people who went to graduate school immediately after the war, and who went on the G.I. Bill. Perhaps many were attracted to university teaching as a postwar profession because in part they felt they understood its mechanisms already. Hence their ambitionness, their sense that if to be a first lieutenant is fine, to work up to lieutenant-general is wonderful. And I suspect that their conception of instruction is still, like mine, tinged with Army. I think all of us of that vintage feel uneasy with forms of teaching that don't recognize a clear hierarchy—team-teaching, for example, or even the seminar, which assumes the fiction that leader and participants possess roughly equal knowledge and authority. For students (that is, enlisted men) to prosecute a rebellion, as in the Sixties and early Seventies, is tantamount to mutiny, an offense, as the Articles of War indicate, "to be punished by death, or such other punishment as a court-martial shall direct." I have never been an enthusiast for the Movement.

In addition to remaining rank-conscious, I persist in the army habit of exact personnel classification. For me, everyone still has an invisible "spec number" indicating what his job is or what he's supposed to be doing. Thus a certain impatience with people of am-

biguous identity or, worse, people who don't seem to do anything, like self-proclaimed novelists and poets who generate no apprehensible product. These seem to me the T-5s of the postwar world, mere technicians fifth grade parasites, drones, noncombatants.

Twenty years after the First World War Siegfried Sassoon reports that he is still having dreams about it, dreams less of terror than of obligation. He dreams that

the War is still going on and I have got to return to the Front. I complain bitterly to myself because it hasn't stopped yet. I am worried because I can't find my active-service kit. I am worried because I have forgotten how to be an officer. I feel that I can't face it again, and sometimes I burst into tears and say, "It's no good, I can't do it." But I know that I can't escape going back, and search frantically for my lost equipment.

That's uniquely the dream of a junior officer. I had such dreams too, and mine persisted until about 1960, when I was thirty-six, past recall age.

THOSE WHO actually fought on the line in the war, especially if they were wounded, constitute an in-group for ever separate from those who did not. Praise or blame does not attach: rather, there is the accidental possession of a special empirical knowledge, a feeling of a mysterious shared ironic awareness manifesting itself in an instinctive skepticism about pretension publicly enunciated truths, the vanities of learning, and the pomp of authority. Those who fought know a secret about themselves and it's not very nice. As Frederic Manning said in 1929, remembering 1914–1918: "War is waged by men; not by beasts, or by gods. It is a peculiarly human activity. To call it a crime against mankind is to miss at least half its significance; it is also the punishment of a crime."

And now that those who fought have grown much older, we must wonder at the frantic avidity with which we struggled then to avoid death, digging our foxholes like madmen, running from danger with burning lungs and pounding hearts. What, really, were we so frightened of? Sometimes now the feeling comes over us that Housman's lines, which in our boyhood we thought attractively cynical are really just:

*Life, to be sure, is nothing much to lose;
But young men think it is, and we were young.*

ARS POLITICA

The CIA Goes Domestic

by Steve Brodner



Casey's moles to serve at home

THE NEW BOY

A story

by Andre Dubus

A SATURDAY NIGHT in summer: his mother and two sisters had dates and he did not want to greet the boys and the man, so he sat by the swimming pool, with his back to the house, and gazed at the lake and the woods beyond it. The house was on the crest of a ridge and, past the pool, the lawn was a long slope down to the lake. The sun was low over the trees, and their shadows spread toward him on the water. When he heard the last car, most of the lake was dark and the sun was nearly gone beyond the trees. The cars would return in the same order: Stephanie by twelve, Julie by two now that she was eighteen, then his mother; he would wake as each one turned into the driveway, and sleep after the front door closed and light footsteps had gone from kitchen to bathroom to bedroom. Stephanie was sixteen and stayed longest at the front door and in the kitchen; his mother was quickest at the door and did not stop at the kitchen unless a man came in for a drink, then Walter slept and woke again when the car started in the driveway, and he listened to his mother climbing the stairs and going to her room. Now she called him, and he looked over his shoulder at her standing behind the screen door.

"I'm going now."

"Have a good time."

WHEN THE CAR was gone, he rose and walked around the pool, then downhill to the lake, darker now than the sky. The sun showed through the woods as burning leaves. Then it was gone, leaving him in the black and gray solitude that touched him, and gave him the

peaceful joy of sorrow that was his alone, that singled him out from all others. A sound intruded: above the frogs' croaking and the flutter and soft splash of stirring geese, so familiar that they were, to him, audible silence, he heard now the rhythmic splashes and lapping of a swimmer. He looked to his right, near the shore, where purple loosestrife stood, deflowered by night, like charcoal strokes three feet tall. Beyond their tops he saw a head and arms and the small white roll of water at the feet. The swimmer angled toward him. Above and behind him, he felt the presence of his house: that place where, nearly always, he could go when he did not want something to happen. He stared at the head and arms coming to him. They rose: slender chest and waist of a boy walking through the dark water, then light bathing suit and legs and the boy stepped onto the bank and shook his head, sprinkling Walter's face, then he pushed his hair back from his forehead. He was neither taller nor broader than Walter, who glanced at the boy's biceps and did not see in them, either, the source of his fear.

"It's against the law to swim in there," he said. "That's a reservoir."

"I pissed in it too. Let's swim in your pool."

"How do you know I have one?"

"You live here?"

"Yes."

"Everybody on this road's got one. I can see all the backyards from the sundeck."

"Don't you have one?"

"It's empty." He started walking up the slope. "Which house?"

"Straight ahead."

Walter followed him up to the lighted house and stood at the shallow end while the boy

ent to the deep end and dived in and swam
ck, then stood.

"I have to go put on my suit."

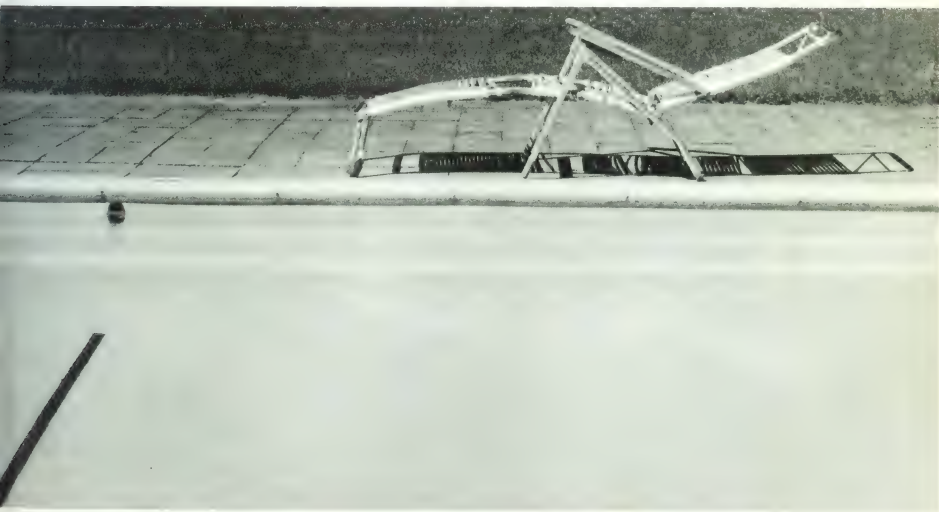
"Turn on the underwater lights."

He turned them on with the switch near the
oor and went upstairs; his room looked over
e pool, and in the dark he stood at the
ndow and undressed, watching the boy
lashing silver as he moved fast through the
ater that was greener now in the light from
e bottom of the pool. Naked, he looked
eyond at the slope and lake and, on its far
de, the trees like a tufted black wall. He put
his damp trunks and went down the car-
eted hall and stairs and out through the
tchen, then ran across flagstones to the side
of the pool, glimpsing the boy to his left, in
e deep end, and dived, opening his eyes to
ubbles and the pale bottom coming up at
m. He touched it with his fingers. Under
e night sky the water felt heavy, deeper. He
ced his back and started to rise; the boy
as up there, breaststroking, then bending
to a dive, coming down at Walter, under his
ted arms: a shoulder struck his chest, an
rm went around it, then the boy was behind
m, the arm moved and was around his neck,
ghtening and pulling, and he went backward
ward the bottom, and with both hands
rked at the wrist and forearm, cool and slick
nder his prying fingers. His jaws were
amped tight on the pressure rising from his
rest. He released some, and bubbles rose
ward the dark air. He rolled toward the
ottom, touched it for balance with a hand,

swung his feet down to it, and thrust upward
with straightening legs; he had exhaled again;
he released the boy's arm and stroked upward
and kicked and kept his mouth closed against
the throbbing emptiness in his chest, then
breathed water and rose to the air choking,
inhaling, coughing. The boy's arm had left his
throat. He did not look behind him. Slowly he
swam away, head out of the water, coughing;
he climbed out of the pool and, bent over,
coughed and spat on the flagstones. He heard
the feet behind him.

"You're crazy," he said, then straightened
and turned and looked at the boy's eyes. He
had seen them before, on school playgrounds:
amused, playful, and with a shimmer of affec-
tion, they had looked at him as knowingly as
his family and his closest friends did. Boys
with those eyes never fought in fury; they
rarely fought at all. They threw your books in
the mud, pushed you against walls, pulled
your hair, punched your arm or stomach,
shamed and goaded you, while watching boys
and girls urged you to fight. Two years ago,
when he was twelve, he had leaped into those
voices, onto the bully, and they rolled grap-
pling in the dust, then he was on his back,
shoulders pinned by knees, fists striking his
face before someone pulled the boy away. For
the rest of the school year he was free; and
for the rest of his boyhood, for he knew that
the months of peace were worth the fear and
pain of the first quick fight, so he was ready
for that, and so was left alone. This boy's eyes
were brown; Walter swung his right fist at

**"Boys with those
eyes never
fought in fury;
they rarely
fought at all."**



Russell Drisch

them and struck the nose. The boy raised a hand to it, and looked at blood on the fingers. He wiped them on his trunks; blood had reached his lip now.

"I didn't know you were scared," the boy said.

"Scared my ass."

"I mean underwater."

"I couldn't breathe."

The boy folded his arms.

"I could."

"Let's go inside and fix your nose."

"Let's go inside and eat."

The boy turned and dived. Swimming underwater he pinched and rubbed his nose, and blood wafted from his fingers, became the green-tinted pale blue of the pool. He swam to the other side; Walter walked around the pool and they went into the kitchen. The boy stood at the bar. Looking into the refrigerator, Walter said: "Peaches, grapes, liverwurst, cheese—four kinds of cheese—" He turned and looked at the boy; his eyes had not changed.

IN THE STILL heat of Sunday morning he slept long and woke clammy to the voices of his sisters and mother rising from the terrace. Every day in summer his sisters slept late, and his mother did on weekends, and he loved those mornings, going downstairs quiet and alone to eat cereal and read the baseball news, feeling in the kitchen silence their sleeping behind the three closed doors above him. They woke loudly, talking in the hall and from one bathroom door to another, and through bedroom doors as they altered their hair and faces; their voices came down the stairs and into the kitchen, then they entered, red-lipped and tan and scented; talking, they turned on the radio and made coffee and lit cigarettes. It seemed that always at least one of them was smoking, at least one was talking, and all three of them were now, on the terrace beneath his window; he had not waked when they came home in the night, so his own night of sleep seemed long; and, having no place to go, he still felt that he was late. He looked down at them sitting at the glass table; their hair, chestnut in three seasons, was lighter; they wore two-piece bathing suits, and his mother and Julie drank Bloody Marys; Stephanie had a glass of wine. His mother let her drink wine at dinner and at Sunday brunch, and only Walter knew that when she drank at brunch she got drunk, for they stayed at the table longer than at any dinner except Thanksgiving and Christmas, and neither Julie nor his mother was sober

enough to notice her rose cheeks and shining eyes. He put on his trunks and made his bed and moved past their rooms, glancing at the beds that would not be made until old Nor from Ireland came to work Monday afternoon; down the stairs into the undulant sound of their voices. He stepped into the sunlight and Stephanie said: "Well finally."

They smiled at him; they wished him a good morning and he returned it; Julie said why couldn't she meet someone as good-looking as her brother; his mother puckered her lips for a kiss and he gave her one. Their hair and bathing suits were dry. He stood above them in the warmth of the sun and their love and his for them; their eyes flushed his cheek and he left: went to the deep end and dived in and swam fast laps of the pool until he was winded, then returned to them. Someone had poured him a glass of orange juice. His mother blew smoke and said: "Spinach crêpes, kid. Can you handle it?"

"Sure."

Stephanie looked down at herself and said "I shouldn't handle anything."

"You're not fat," he said.

"I need to lose seven pounds."

"Bull."

"She does," his mother said. "But not today."

"Do it gradually," Julie said. "Give yourself three weeks."

"That's August. I'd like to get into my bathing suit before August."

He looked through the glass table at his black pants like a wide belt around her hips.

"You're in it," he said.

"And look what shows," and she pinched flesh above the pants.

"You have to be really skinny to wear those things," he said, then grinned, looking through glass at his mother's and Julie's flat skin above the maroon and blue swathes, and Julie said "Okay, everybody stare at Walter's pelvis."

He stood and, profiled to them, he drew out his stomach muscles, expanded his chest, flexed his left arm, and looked down at them over the rising and falling curve of his bicep as he rotated his wrist.

"Our macho man," Julie said, and his father was there: not a memory of the broad hair, chest, and hair curling over the gold watchband as he read the Sunday paper before swimming; his laps, but his father in Philadelphia, in the apartment of leaves: plants growing downward from suspended pots and upward from pots on tables and floor, his father like a man rearing in a jungle clearing; he sat and drank juice and his mother said: "Were you up late last night?"

"No."

"What did you do?"

"Nothing."

He picked up a green cigarette pack, let it fall, pushed it toward Stephanie. He looked beyond Julie at Canada geese on the lake; his mother and the girls were talking again, and he leaned back in the canvas deck chair and looked up at the blue sky, then closed his eyes and turned his face to the sun, and breathed deeply into the chill of his lie until it was gone, and his mother went to the kitchen, and he closed his eyes and watched the girls talking. They rarely said anything he wanted to know, but he liked hearing their voices and watching their faces and hands: they spoke of clothes, and he looked with tender amusement at their sensitive eyes, their lips closing on cigarettes, then sensuous pouts he knew they had practiced; hair fell onto their cheeks, and their hands rose to it and lightly swept it back, as stroking a spiderweb. From the house behind him, his mother came with a broad tray: a bottle of white wine in an ice bucket, a bowl of fruit, four plates with crêpes, a glass of milk, and ringed napkins. He believed Julie—it maybe Stephanie—had asked one Sunday: *What did you do with Dad's napkin ring?* But since he could not remember the answer, he was not sure anyone had ever asked; perhaps he had dreamed it; or had imagined someone asking, and had waited for that; he slipped then from silver, and his mother asked him to pour the wine. For over a year of Sundays and dinners he had poured the wine, but always he waited for his mother to ask him: he disliked saying what his father had done, felt artificial and very young and disloyal too, as if he were helping to close the space his father had left behind; and he disliked her never saying that she wanted him to pour because his father was gone. While his sisters nibbled and moaned and sipped, he ate fast, head down, waiting for his mother to strike back, knowing she was watching yet would not tell him the truth: that she wanted him to eat with slow appreciation of her work. She would tell him that eating fast was bad for him. Then he heard the squeak-skid of brakes and tires and turned to see him at the edge of the terrace, straddling his bicycle, barechested, wearing cut-off jeans and sneakers without socks. Walter nodded at him, ate the last of the crêpe, and stood, looking at his mother as he swallowed and wiped his mouth.

"I'm going bike riding."

"Who's that?"

"Mark Evans." Walking away, he looked back over his shoulder and said: "They moved yesterday."

IN THE WOODS near the road he and Mark lay face down in the shadow of trees and looked through branches and brown needles of a large fallen branch of pine; Mark had dragged it from deeper in the woods, where their bicycles were chained to a tree. Moist dead leaves were cool against Walter's flesh.

Out in the sunlight the white handkerchief hung: folded over a length of fishing line tied to trees on either side of the narrow road, it was suspended three feet above the blacktop, motionless in the still air.

"It's like waiting in ambush," Walter said.

"It's better at night. It looks like a ghost at night."

"It looks like one now."

The first car that came around the curve down the road to their left was green and foreign; Walter pressed his palms and bare toes against the earth and saw a second shape behind the windshield, a woman, and then two more figures in the back, and now the driver's face: a man beyond the hood, wearing sunglasses, right hand at the top of the wheel, peering now, shifting down, slowing and slowing, the woman's hands in front of her, pushing toward the windshield, then her head out of the window, saying "What is it?" and the children leaning forward, arms and hands out of the windows, and the man stopped and got out. He was tall and wore a suit, and Walter pressed against the leaves and watched him holding the line and looking down both of its ends; then breaking it, and watching the handkerchief fall, and standing with fists on his hips, turning his head from one side of the road to the other as he spoke: "I want you boys to think about something while you're in there laughing and having your fun. You could kill somebody. You could make somebody swerve into another car. I've got two kids in mine. You could have caused something you'd regret for the rest of your lives." Then he went back to his car. Before he got in, his wife said: "Don't just leave it in the road."

"I don't want to touch it."

She opened the door but he said "Let's go" and got in and shifted and drove slowly by, his wife hunting the woods, her eyes sweeping the fallen pine branch. Then the car was hidden by trees and he listened to it going faster up the road, and laughing he stood and squeezed Mark's shoulders and hopped and skipped in a circle, pulling Mark with him, forcing the sound of his laughter faster when it slowed and louder when it lulled; he stopped dancing and laughing, but still quivering with jubilation, he squeezed Mark's shoulder and shouted: "I don't want to touch it."

"They rarely said anything he wanted to know."

WHEN HE RODE his bicycle up the driveway, the sun was low above the trees across the lake, and his mother and sisters were still at the glass table; then coming out of the garage, he saw that it was not still but again: his mother and Julie wore dresses and Stephanie wore shorts; beyond them, downwind, smoke rose from charcoal in the wheeled grill.

"I'll be right down," he said.

"I'm coming up," his mother said.

He went into the pale light of the house, up the stairs, hearing the screen door open and shut, and the clack of her steps on the kitchen floor then muted by carpets as she followed him up. His room was sunlit. He looked down at Julie and Stephanie, then turned to face the door a moment before she entered it. Her dress was white and, between its straps, a pearl necklace lay on her tan skin. She had a cigarette in one hand and a drink in the other: a tall clear one with a piece of lime among the bubbles and ice. "Did you have a good day?"

"Yes."

"Where did you go?"

"Bike riding."

She put her drink on the chest of drawers and flicked ashes into her hand.

"That's quite a workout."

"We went to the woods too."

"You were right across the lake?"

"The big woods. By the highway."

"Oh. You said—Mark?—moved here yesterday? When did you meet him?"

"Last night."

"Where?"

"Here. He was looking around."

"Well I don't want to"—she glanced at her drink, drew on her cigarette, flicked ashes in her hand—"I don't want to make a big thing out of it, but why didn't you tell me?"

"I don't know."

"You really don't? That's so—I don't know, it's so—*strange*." With forefinger and thumb of her ash hand she picked up her drink.

"Well. Will you do something for me? Ask him to come over sometime when I'm home. We'll have dinner. Will you do that?"

"I'll ask him."

He looked at the cigarette burning close to her fingers.

"Good. I like meeting your friends. You have time to shower before dinner, pal."

"I was about to."

She smiled and left and he followed her to the door and said to her back as she moved down the hall, gingerly holding the drink and cigarette: "Will I have time to swim?"

"Plenty of time," she called over her shoulder. "It's pork."

THE APARTMENT in Philadelphia smelled of the city, not only exhaust but some thing else that came through the open windows: a staleness, as though Philadelphia itself were enclosed by ceiling and walls, and today's breeze carried to his lung yesterday's cement and stirred dust; when the windows were closed, the apartment's motionless air had no smell and that too, for Walter was Philadelphia. With his father in the apartment she had filled with plants was blonde Jenny who, that first morning when he visited them for a weekend, knocked on his door and he woke remembering where he was and said *Yes* and she came in with a tray holding hot chocolate and bread she had baked last night wrapped in hot foil—that child, his mother had said, that child. *With those clothes from Nashville by way of Hollywood. What is she. There aren't any more hippies. I'm sorry, children, he's your father but I cannot can no live quietly through this mad time. She was born the year we were married and I've spent twenty-two years giving my life to my husband and my home and now it feels like I was just taking care of him while she did nothing but get taller and busty so he could leave with her*—Jenny sat on the bed and talked to him while he drank the chocolate and ate the bread and liked her, and understood his father's loving her, and so shared his father's guilt. He was the first to visit; in two weeks Stephanie would come, and then Julie, because there was only the one guest room, his father said, and his mother said: *He's protecting that girl from handling all of you at once. Jenny said: You probably don't like breakfast in bed and he said: No, not even when I'm sick and she blushed, smiling at herself, and said: I don't either. I'll stop trying so hard. Are you all right?* At first he thought she meant the bed the room, his hunger, then looking at her he knew she didn't, and he said: *Yes. And Stephanie and Julie? They'll be all right. They're not now? They'll get better. Is your mom? No. That's why they're not. It's awful. I wish—*He wanted to hear the wish: perhaps behind her worried blue eyes she wished his father had no wife, no children, that he and his mother and Julie and Stephanie were dead or had never lived; now sadly he saw them, the woman and girls he had left at home: the were in the living room, talking, then the vanished; for moments their voices lingered in the room and then faded with them into space. *There's too much to wish, she said there's nothing to wish. I just have to hope. For what? That nobody's hurt too badly for too long.*

Sunday night he boarded an airplane for

second time in three days and in his life; had spent most of the flight Friday afternoon imagining the weekend, making himself awkwardly intrusive in his father's home and life before he saw either. He had met Jenny, had eaten dinner in restaurants with her and his father and sisters; but that was all. Sunday in the plane he liked being alone with the small light over his head and the black sky at his cool window; a man sat beside him, but he was alone: no one knew him, and when the stewardess spoke to him, though he were either boy or man, he felt at his age as well as his name had remained the earth. Philadelphia was done; Philadelphia was good; he could go back, and now was going home.

His mother and sisters ate dinner in Boston, then met him at the airport, and he sat in the cockpit with Stephanie; the night was cool and in the closed car he remembered what he had forgotten to remember until now: Jenny had his father smelled of soap and cloth and ash, and no smoke drifted toward his face through the still air of their rooms. He started to say this, nearly said: *At least she doesn't smoke*; then he knew he must not.

"So how was it," Stephanie said, and watching his mother in part profile, hair and upper neck, her hand on the wheel, smoke pluming from her mouth he could not see, he told of the weekend without once saying *Jenny*. For the next few nights, when at dinner they questioned him or he remembered something about the weekend that he wanted to make alive

again with words so it would be more than just a memory, he glanced from his sisters to his mother's face, her eyes quick and lips severely set, and said *Dad* and *we* and all but twice was able to avoid saying even *they*, until finally he could no longer bear the shame of loving two women and betraying them both, and he kept his memories in silence. Then Stephanie went to Philadelphia and came back and he watched his mother's face at the dinners and said nothing or little and began to rid himself of shame, and in the week after Julie's visit he knew he had never had reason for shame, that he had not been afraid to tell his mother he loved Jenny too, that it was not he but she who needed the lie; and, loving her, he felt detached and older and at times he was lonely.

The extended family, she calls us. I hope we can be like sisters someday; she actually said that. What did you say? I wanted to say Right, airhead: incest. She gives him three eggs a week. She doesn't know what to call him. When she talks about him to us. She said that. She feels funny when she says Walter and funny when she says Your father. So what does she do? She takes turns. And if she's talking to him she says Hon. Or Darling. No: nobody says darling except in books. She watches his salt too. And every day before dinner they go to this health club and swim. How cute. She's the one who needs it, old thunder thighs. She had a pimple. She looks out of those big blue eyes and talks about how much he cares about us and I wanted to tell

"He could no longer bear the shame of loving two women and betraying them both."



Russell Drisch

her if he cares so much why is he here with you and she's got a pimple on her chin—

He watched them: their faces over plates of food glowed with malice, the timbre of their voices was sensually wicked, their throaty laughter mischievous. They were eerie and fascinating; he had never seen them like this. He knew his silence was not disloyal to his father and Jenny; sometimes he gave his mother's eyes what they had to see: he smiled, even laughed.

AT NIGHT THE handkerchief was a pale shape in the air, then lit by headlights, and he knew that to the driver it had suddenly appeared without locomotion or support, and the cars stopped faster, and the voices from them were more frightened and then more angry. One night they rode past the woods to the bridge over the highway and leaned on the steel fence and watched the four lanes of cars coming to them and passing below. They pressed against the vertical railings and pissed arcs dropping into headlights.

"I've got to shit," he said, and started for the woods.

"Wait. We can use that."

He stopped and looked at Mark, then down at the cars.

"You think I'm going to squat on that little fence and shit over the highway?"

Near the bridge the woods ended at a small clearing before the slope going steeply down to the highway. Among beer bottles and cans Mark found a paper bag.

"It won't do anything," Walter said. "When it hits the car. *If* it hits it."

"You have any matches?"

"No."

"We'll get some. Go on."

He started to go into the woods, but Mark turned and walked back to the bridge, so he squatted in the clearing and looked at bottles and tire tracks in the grass that was high enough to tickle his shins, and wondered when the teenagers parked here; he had seen them: once there were three or four cars and boys and girls sitting on fenders or standing, but the other times it was only one car nestled in the shadows of the woods, dully and for an instant reflecting his mother's headlights as she drove off the bridge. Always he had seen them from his mother's car, when they had been to a movie or dinner and were coming home late. Carrying the bag away from his body, he went onto the bridge, his face turned to the breeze.

"If we wait, we can get some parkers," he said.

"Get our asses whipped too."

"We could sneak through the woods. I'll take the air out of the back tires, then throw them in the front window."

"What do you think he'll be doing while that hissing is going on?"

"Getting out and beating our asses. We could get close enough to listen, though. Maybe even look in."

"Now you're talking. Maybe we can throw up a trap. Something he'd drive into and couldn't get out of. Let's go find a front porch to burn your dinner on."

With headlights on, they rode fast over the winding road, past the woods and then open country where the lighted houses were separated by low ridges and shallow draws and trees planted in lines and orchards, and under Walter's driveway, onto the terrace, where he placed the bag beside his kickstand. In the kitchen they looked on counters and in drawers and behind the bar.

"They use lighters."

He went upstairs with Mark following, into his mother's room, and switched on the ceiling light, standing a moment, looking at her window bed covered with light blue, and felt behind him Mark breathing the air of the room while his eyes probed it. He moved to the dresser and when Mark pulled open a drawer of the chest at another wall, he raised his face and looked at himself in the mirror. Then he looked down, and between a hairbrush and an ashtray saw a glossy black matchbook bearing a name in gold script.

"Let's go," he said, and crossed the room and closed the drawer as Mark's hand, dropping a stack of silk pants, withdrew.

He did not know any of the neighbors well enough to choose a target, so with lights on they rode to the last house before the woods and walked their bicycles up the long driveway between tall trees, and laid them on the ground where the pavement curved and rose through open lawn to the garage beside the house. Upstairs one room was lighted, and light came through the two high windows on either side of the small front porch with a low narrow roof and two columns. At the base of a tree they lay on their bellies and watched the windows, and Mark whispered: "Don't even think your shit doesn't stink," and the pressed hands against their mouths and laughed through their noses. Then crouching they ran to the front porch and listened and heard nothing. Walter set the bag near the screen door and unfolded its top and listened again, then struck the match and held the flame to one corner of the opening, and the other, and stood, and when fire was moving

THE TRUTH

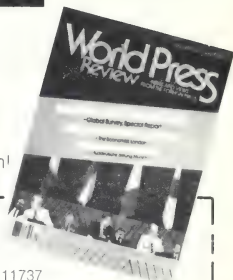
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down the sides, Mark pressed the doorbell and held it chiming inside the house, then they ran to the tree, and Walter dived beside it and rolled behind it next to Mark. The door swung inward, a short wide man stepped into its frame, then said something fast and low, and pushed open the screen and with one foot stomped the flames smaller and smaller to embers and smoke, then he cursed, and Mark was running and Walter was too, hearing cursing and heavy running steps coming as he ran beside his bicycle down the driveway and jumped onto the seat, passing Mark before the road, where he turned and pumped for the woods.

ACROSS THE GLASS table Mark's wet hair was sleek in the sunlight. He sat beside Julie; the sun, nearing the trees across the lake, was behind and just above him, so that Walter squinted at him. Walter's mother had thawed chicken, then when she came home early from the boutique she had bought after going to court with his father, she said she had decided on hamburgers because some people were clumsy about eating barbecued chicken with a knife and fork and she didn't want to make it hard on him. Walter had said Mark could eat chicken with his hands, and she said she knew he could and Walter would like to, and that's what she meant about making it hard on Mark.

She could clean the bones of a chicken with knife and fork as daintily as if she were eating lima beans, so he liked watching her with a hamburger: it was thick and it dripped catsup and juice from the meat and tomatoes and pickles; she leaned over the plate, and opened her mouth wide enough to close on both buns, yet with that width of jaws she took only a small bite from the edge and lowered the hamburger, then sat straight to chew with her lips closed. Julie's and Stephanie's bites were larger but still small, and neither had to use a napkin. He and Mark had stayed in the pool until now, so his mother was asking questions between eating: where he was from and what his father did and did his mother work, how many brothers and sisters and where had he gone to school. Some of this was new to Walter; the rest of it he had learned in the woods, during the heat of afternoons as they lay on cool shadowed grass and spoke to avoid silence. His mother's questions ended before her hamburger did; she held her wine glass toward Walter and he filled it. then she said: "And your sisters," and he reached to their places and poured, then held the bottle over Mark's glass of milk, and Mark said: "Go

ahead."

"Just two more years," his mother said, and she leaned toward him and tousled his w hair. "This boy of mine," she said to Mar, and dried her hand with her napkin.

"He'll be doing more than wine in two mo years," Julie said.

"A lot more," Stephanie said, and smile at Mark.

"Like what?" Walter said.

"You'll have a girl," Julie said.

"Maybe not."

"You will. Some girl will take care of that."

"Wow," he said to Mark. "I'll have a date."

"In the car," Mark said.

"With a girl."

"And you'll love it," his mother said. "Yo two guys will beg for the car and start lookin in the mirror. We have blueberry pie and ic cream."

"Tell me you didn't," Stephanie said. "No blueberry. I'm going to be very fat tonight."

"You might get an older man," his mothe said. "Dessert is for these boys who swim an ride bikes all day."

"I swam this morning," Stephanie said, an stood, and then Julie and his mother did, an when he pushed back his chair she said: "Sta with your guest. We'll do it," and they wer all in motion, clearing and wiping the tabl and setting it again with ashtrays and cigarette packs and plates and three demitasse and a silver coffee pot, and pie and ice creat for everyone, though he and Mark had th biggest slices and scoops. When his mothe reached for her cigarettes, he stood and said "Let's go down to the lake."

He rolled his napkin and pushed it into th ring, and when Mark started to, he told him to leave it, the guest napkin gets washed.

Near the bank of the lake he found a smal flat rock and skimmed it, hitting once on th sunlit surface and three times in the shadow before it sank. He paced up and down, looking for another rock, and Mark lay on th grass in the sun, and said: "They're pretty."

He sat beside Mark and looked at the flower of purple loosteirfe and then at a crow risin from the trees.

"Sometimes I wish I lived with my father."

"Can you?"

"They never asked me to."

He did not like the sound of his voice; in its softening he heard tears coming, and fo a long time he had not cried about anything. He sat up and plucked a blade of grass and chewed it. Julie did not like the monthly visit to his father because she missed her boyfriend and Stephanie did not like them because sh could not smoke there and she missed her boy

end, and neither one of them had forgiven their father. He would like to spend the summer here, and he knew now that for a long time he had made himself believe his father had never asked or even hinted because the argument was too small.

"Do they fuck?" Mark said.

"Who?"

He pointed a thumb over his shoulder, and after turned and looked up the hill; sunlight flashed bronze on their hair.

"How would I know?" he said, and looked at his bare toes in the grass.

"Lots of ways, if you wanted to."

"I never thought about it."

"You're weird."

"Sometimes I think about it. When they go to."

HE WAS AWAKE when they came home, starting with Stephanie at eighteen minutes past midnight on his luminous digital clock and ending with his mother at three twenty-nine, and if he put at all he did not know it, for even if he did, he still saw in his mind what he saw awake. *Too much*, Mark had said, as Walter's head rose from Stephanie's drawer with the red plastic case like a clamshell, and he opened it open and it was empty too. *Everybody's fucking but you. I'll have to jerk off tonight*. But not him: he lay on the warm sheet under the cooling night air and listened for them, and then to them: the downstairs footsteps when the sound of the car was gone—a sound that chilled him with yearning hatred, as though they were bound to the bed by someone he could not hit—then steps climbing the stairs and to their bedrooms that he felt part of now and was both ashamed and vengeful because Mark was part of them too) and, in there, lower and lighter steps so that for moments he did not hear them and then did again, at the other part of the room. He tried to think it could not: tried to focus on each of them, to see the other two from his mind, and reasonably say to himself: *Dad has Jenny and she ought to have someone too or Julie's eighteen and people when they're eighteen but he could do no further and did not even try with Stephanie*, for as soon as he focused on one, the other two were back in his room, among its shadows and furniture, and they all merged: naked, their legs embracing the cruelly plunging bodies of the two boys and one man he knew, and he saw their three open-mouthed wild-haired faces, and heard sounds he had not known he knew: fast heavy breath and soft

cries and grunts and, between their legs, sloshing thuds; heard these as he waited and as they climbed the stairs and turned on faucets and flushed toilets—Did it drip out of them and drop spreading and slowly sinking like thick sour milk, droplets left on that hair he had never seen, and did they—*wipe* it then with paper, the motion of arm and hand, the expressions on their faces as common as if nothing were there and in the water below their—again: naked—flesh but piss? Or did it stay in the diaphragm that Mark said was shaped like half an orange peel with the fruit gone? He tightened his legs and arms, shook his head on the pillow, shut his eyes to a darker dark; between his legs he felt nothing. When did they take it out? And how did their faces look when they took it out? He saw them frowning, nauseated, wickedly pleased. Once he had a large boil on his leg and the doctor froze it and lanced it and for weeks he had to fight his memory when he ate. He could not imagine them now in clothes, nor in bathing suits, nor simply eating on the terrace or at the kitchen or dining-room table; he tried to remember them in winter, fur-covered, leaving the house and walking with short careful steps over the icy sidewalk, moving into the vapor of their breath as it wafted about their heads. But he could not, as though all he had known of them clothed was a mask that tonight he had pulled from their faces. When at last his mother's steps ended, he imagined them all settled between sheets, their legs closed now, at rest, and he thought: *They must stink*.

HE WOKE TO a bird's shriek and sunlight, and went barefooted down the hall, looking at each door closed on the darkened blind-drawn cool of the room and bed and soft breathing of sleep, and out of the house and onto his bicycle. He rode toward the woods. He was hungry and thirsty and had not brushed his teeth, so the taste of night was still in his mouth, and he opened it to the breeze. Then he was there: the fragrance of pines sharper among the other smells of green life and earth and the old dappled leaves moist and soft under his feet as he walked his bicycle without trail or pattern between and under tall trees and around brush, the sweat from his ride drying now, cooling him in the shade as he moved farther into the woods that had waked while he slept; above him squirrels rustled leaves as they moved higher and birds fluttered from perches and twice he heard the sudden flight of a rabbit. In a glade lit by the sun he stood up his bicycle and lay on his back with hands

"He did not like the sound of his voice; in its softening he heard tears coming."

clasped behind his head and closed his eyes. The sun warmed his face, and beneath his eyelids he felt the heat and saw specks of red and orange in the darkness, and he tried to see them as he had known them, but he could not dress them, could not cover their nakedness, and could not keep them naked alone: behind his eyes they slowly revolved, coupling with the two boys and the man, and he tried to see nothing at all but the speckled dark, and then tried to see the food his stomach wanted, the juice for his dry throat, and then tried to concentrate his rage only on the two boys and the man whose faces had the glazed look of a dog's above the bitch's back, but he could not do that either, and the sounds from the six writhing bodies were louder than the woods.

He stood and moved out of the sunlight, into the shade of a maple, and unzipped and pissed, then stroked, shutting his eyes against the softness his hand encircled, seeing an infected and oozing orange peel, the softness even receding as though trying to withdraw from his abrasive fingers. He opened his eyes. Then he lay on his belly in the sunlight and pressed his cheek against the earth and held its grass with both hands.

W E HAD TO LEAVE *before you came home. We went shopping in Boston and will be back before dinner. Mark was looking for you and said he'd be back after lunch. Love, Mom,* and a smiling line for a mouth drawn inside a circle with two eyes and a nose. He left the note on the table in front of him while he ate cereal and a peanut-butter sandwich, then he took the small garbage basket from under the sink and went upstairs. He went to Stephanie's room first. It was still darkened and he opened the blinds and looked at the tossed-back top sheet and bedspread and stuffed brown bear and blue rabbit near a pillow; actors and singers watched him from the walls; he opened the drawer and took out the case and opened it with a click that tensed his arms. *It's more like a hollowed-out mushroom;* then he realized he was holding his breath, and he let it out, and breathing fast and shallow he turned the case over and watched the diaphragm drop softly among banana peels and milk carton and tuna-fish can. As he put the case under silk in the drawer, he knew why he had gone to her room first: the youngest, only a few years removed from the time when pranks on each other were as much part of their days as laughter.

The basket was wicker and lined with a

plastic bag. He brought it to Julie's room, and opened her blinds and was crossing the floor when his name rose from outside, into the room; he stood still, gripping the basket, while Mark called again then rang the back doorbell and called and then was quiet, but Walter could feel him down there, and he stood looking at the soft yellow wall, listening to the slow breeze and a car coming and passing by, then crept to the window and looked down at the empty terrace. Quickly he took the case from the drawer and emptied it in the basket.

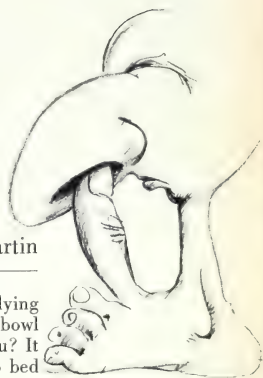
In his mother's room he did not open the blinds; he walked softly as though she were sleeping there; he glanced at the sheets and pillows, and quietly slid open the drawer where last night Mark had found it, the first one they had found, while Walter was opening leather boxes of jewelry at her dresser, telling Mark to start in another room so that he could work faster. He put the basket on the floor and held the open case in both hands. He lifted it closer to his eyes. He looked at it until his breathing slowed; and when he stopped hearing his breathing, he was suddenly tired, and as he lowered one hand and turned the other and watched the brief white descent, he wanted to sleep.

T HEIR VOICES woke him, and when they started up the stairs, he turned quietly onto his side, his back to the door, and heard the girls with soft-crackling shopping bags going into their rooms and his mother coming to him; she stopped at the doorway and he breathed as though asleep until she turned and went to her room. He opened his eyes to the lake and trees and the low sun. He waited until he heard showers in all three bathrooms. Then he ran on tiptoes down the hall and stairs, and at the terrace he sprinted past the pool and down toward the widening lake, and fell forward and struck with knees and palms, and rolled and stood and ran again, weight on his heels now, leaping when his balance shifted forward: running and leaping to the bottom of the hill where he could not stop: with short flat-footed steps he went across the narrow mud bank and into the water deep as his knees and then was sitting in it. He stood and looked up at the house, and high and beyond it at the sky. Then he eased backward into the water and floated. Behind him the geese stirred and he listened to their wings as they rose and settled again. He backstroked toward the middle, then floated. Now the trees were on his left and he looked at their green crowns and the sky and waited for his mother's voice calling from the terrace.

HOW TO PICK YOUR NOSE

up-to-date advice from Miss Manners

by Judith Martin



IF MISS MANNERS hears any more contemptuous descriptions of etiquette as being a matter of "knowing which fork to use," she will run amok with a sharp weapon, and the people she attacks will all be left with tiny holes in their throats as if they had been the victims of twin vampires.

Knowing or caring which fork to use is regularly cited as proof that one is narrowly tied on a detail of life that is probably a deliberate booby trap set by the snobbish to catch the unsuspecting; and that therefore one has no time or heart left for the great spiritual issues of life. The Great Fork Problem is used to ridicule the holy subject of etiquette, but the defenders of etiquette use it, too, when they claim that manners are "a matter of being considerate of others, not of which fork to use." In either case, this is like declaring that as long as you have a true love for humanity, it is not important that you happen to have it on your left shoe on your right foot and your right shoe on your left foot.

Forks are not that difficult. It is possible at anyone who has learned to operate a computer, kitchen machine, or washer with delicate-fabric cycles may also be capable of being trained to operate as many as three forks.

Why is this important? Because the person who has not mastered the fork is going to make a mess, miss the last course of dinner, or make the hostess get up from the table. Also, the forks may get tired someday of being bad-mouthed, and may cut off your food supply. Therefore, we will now take a minute to learn everything there is to know about Which Fork to Use.

Use the one farthest to your left.

That's it. That's all there is to know. Now sit outside and cultivate the spirit until dinner time. When you come in to dinner, you will find, typically (if you are dining with Miss Manners), that there are three forks to the left of your plate, three knives to the right, a soup

spoon, and a teeny-weeny little forklet lying on the diagonal, resting its head in the bowl of the spoon. Now, what does this tell you? It tells you that you are not going to go to bed hungry; that's what it tells you.

DEAR MISS MANNERS: Is it proper to mush ice cream that is served in a bowl? I prefer to eat it soft.

GENTLE READER: No, it isn't, but it does taste better that way, doesn't it? The proper method is to become vivaciously engaged in conversation as soon as the ice cream has been served, and then, when it has turned into a puddle on its own, to eat it.

DEAR MISS MANNERS: I am very interested in a young gentleman engineer, but am unable to hold a nontechnical conversation with him. Should I obtain a B.Sc. degree?

GENTLE READER: You see all those twenty-year-old marriages that are breaking up all around you? Well, those wives are from an era when women educated themselves to be able to understand and talk intelligently about their husbands' careers. The husbands are now leaving them—or they are leaving the husbands—for someone who gives them a fresh new outlook on life.

DEAR MISS MANNERS: What do I call my husband?

GENTLE READER: Probably "honey." How would Miss Manners know? Possibly you are asking what to call him when referring to him in conversations with other people. Use his name or, if you have trouble remembering names, refer to him as "my husband." What are to be avoided are terms that suggest you know him too little or too well, such as "Mr." or "lover."

DEAR MISS MANNERS:

If I get an uncanceled stamp on a letter that comes to me in the mail, is it ethical to pick it off and use it again myself?

GENTLE READER: No, but when you do, watch out for the Frank Lloyd Wright stamps. The lines in the Guggenheim Museum behind his head make it difficult to tell if the stamp was canceled or not.

Judith Martin is a drama and film critic for the Washington Post.

These excerpts are taken from Miss Manners' Guide to Excruciatingly Correct Behavior, to be published by Atheneum in May. Copyright © 1982 by United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

DEAR MISS MANNERS: What am I supposed to say when I am introduced to a homosexual "couple"?

GENTLE READER: "How do you do?" "How do you do?"

DEAR MISS MANNERS: What do you consider a good conversation opener?

GENTLE READER: Almost anything except "I've been on a wonderful journey of self-discovery lately, and I'd like to share it with you."

DEAR MISS MANNERS: When my son and his girlfriend come home to visit, they expect to share his bedroom. I know they are living together at college, but I don't feel right about it in my house. My son says I'm being Victorian.

GENTLE READER: No, you're not. The Victorian solution, employed with great success at English house parties, was to put illicit couples in separate rooms but to ignore nocturnal traffic in the hallway.

LET US make a special effort to learn to stop communicating with one another, so that we can have some conversation. Miss Manners realizes that it is the national goal for everyone to communicate, and she appreciates what an effort that is. Especially the part about having to communicate the need for communication. It isn't very interesting, is it? Miss Manners's hope is that, having learned to communicate, people have now rid themselves of their emotional backlogs and are willing to return to talking like civilized people.

In communication, people express their true feelings and tell everything about themselves with complete honesty, holding back nothing except their last names. "Hi," a good communicator will open, "I'm Josh!" Or "I'm Heather!" And by the end of the soup course, you will know how this person feels about our environment, the role of women, an ex-spouse and/or ex-lover, joggers, Humphrey Bogart, people who are not afraid to show their feelings, people who are not afraid to be vulnerable, the materialistic society, the media, what people would eat if they knew what was good, and the rewards of working with people.

A true communicator will take the trouble to find out your name and to insert it into his recital often, the way creators of form letters are now able to do through the wonders of technology. A form question will appear now and again, also, inviting the communicatee to fill in his or her taste preferences, but only if they conform to those stated. Because the communicator is telling all, many of these questions will be what used to be called nosy, and still should be. Such exchanges are achieved more efficiently by buttons, T-shirts, and bumper stickers. These are available ready-made to announce one's politics, preferences, and availability, so there is no need to devote time to them that could otherwise be pleasantly spent in conversation.

True conversation cannot be preprinted. One must bring ready-made ingredients, such as information, experience, anecdotes, and opinions, prepared to have them challenged and to contribute to a new group effort. That is what conversation is: developing and playing with ideas by juxtaposing the accumulated conclusions of two or more people and then improvising on them. Conversation is not:

Gossip about oneself. The preliminary to conversation consists of asking and stating personal information, but that is only for the purpose of choosing a real topic. As soon as a common interest has been found, the quizzing should be stopped and the development of conversation begun.

Recitals. Conversation being an exchange of long stories, such as jokes or travelogues, cannot be included unless they are abbreviated and offered in illustration of the conversational idea.

News. Startling bulletins may be effective, suggesting ideas, but the popular notion that being able to recite current political and cultural news accurately makes one a conversationalist is erroneous. The person who has actually read the book that everyone is supposed to be talking about is a menace unless everybody is really talking about it.

Advertisements. From the direct sales pitch to a play for the goodwill of influential people, the rule is that if it is designed to advance your career, it isn't conversation. The same rule of public-service announcements, such as recommending one's therapist or one's diet.

DEAR MISS MANNERS: How do you clean your nose, if you're not supposed to "pick" it? I'm not trying to be funny—I was told that this is always disgusting, and yet it is obviously necessary.

GENTLE READER: In manners, as distinct from morals—an icky, messy subject which fortunately is not Miss Manners's field—the only recognized act is one that has been witnessed. The number of practices, disgusting or exciting, usual or unusual, in which you wish to engage in private is of no concern to society.

DEAR MISS MANNERS: With the advent of telephone answering machines, a problem of etiquette has arisen. What should one do upon reaching one of these electronic marvels? I hang up whenever I reach them, as I hate talking to a machine. I know this is not proper, but what is?

GENTLE READER: It is perfectly proper to hang up on a machine. In fact, the whole concept of proper and improper behavior does not apply between people and machines. Miss Manners has enough trouble getting people to be polite to one another without worrying about whether they are treating machines with consideration.

DEAR MISS MANNERS: In talking about stocking-seam straightening, you commented, "Your mother probably knew what it was to have to straighten a girdle, and may you and future generations be spared from ever finding out." You really must be some kind of Women's Lib kook! Too bad your mother



Isn't tell you that even fashion models wear girdles to give their dresses a smoother look! I want to see idiots like you tell it all ag out!! A lot of women without girdles look like the south end of a hippopotamus going north! Even skinny women from the north look like a bowl of Jell-O being shook! With women like you advising them, no wonder we see girls pregnant without being married.

GENTLE READER: Miss Manners may not be nasty, but at least she does not have the impression that girdles prevent pregnancy.

DEAR MISS MANNERS: What is the proper reply when someone says, "Excuse me"?

GENTLE READER: A weak smile. The way to perform a weak smile is to raise the corners of the mouth without moving the rest of the face, which remain closed. The length of the weak smile depends on the magnitude of the act for which the excuse is requested. For example, if a person has asked to be excused for burping, the weak smile in response should last only a fleeting moment, as did the burp, one hopes. If he asks to be excused for breaking a porcelain vase that your great-grandfather brought back from China, the weak smile becomes permanent. This is to distract attention from the expression in your eyes as you stare at the fragments of china on the floor.

ALTHOUGH Miss Manners is a great believer in fresh air and acting out one's beliefs, she cannot say that she is happy to see so many people out picketing these days. The weekly sums that unions are able to allow to members who engage in this activity do not seem to Miss Manners to be commensurate with the strenuousness of the picketing and the working conditions on most sidewalks.

It is for this reason that Miss Manners would specially urge consideration to picketers on the part of the public, quite aside from the moral or social issues.

Miss Manners also expects picketers to treat the public with courtesy. So does the law, for that matter. The conventions of picketing allow striking workers to make known their views through ritualistic marching in an orderly pattern, the carrying of signs, and distribution of leaflets. Miss Manners expects them to observe the amenities by not making their signs obscene or forcing leaflets on those who do not wish to take them.

Proper dress for picketers is either outdoor

apparel appropriate to the weather or the working clothes of the striking profession. Miss Manners was glad to see some striking Washington musicians wearing white tie, and was even willing to waive for the occasion the general rule about not wearing evening dress during the day. In return, Miss Manners expects the public to remember the dignity of labor and not to engage in undignified behavior toward its representatives. This means no shouting at them, no throwing of fruit or other objects, and no deliberate jostling. It also means that while one can decline to accept a leaflet, one may not take it and then visibly treat it with contempt, such as tearing it up or throwing it on the sidewalk. Ideological differences are no excuse for rudeness.

WRITING is such a useful social skill that Miss Manners is surprised that more people don't bother to learn it. She appreciates the fact that our school systems are overloaded with the task of teaching creativity and adjustment, but some of the happy people it turns out might enjoy writing if they tried it.

By writing, Miss Manners means the ability to compose a few clear statements and write them clearly, by hand. Such mechanical wonders as typewriters, telephones, greeting cards, and computers have not eliminated the need for writing by hand.

If you cannot master writing, you will: Begin married life with the enmity of all four parents, whose friends' presents have not been acknowledged properly.

Not be able to get married in the first place, because you will be unable to address the invitations.

Find that your autograph becomes worthless at auction, because nobody can figure out whose it is.

Spend a lot of time having silly telephone conversations.

Discover that your family has been reading your diary from the typewriter ribbon.

Have to go to the expense of having your menu cards for formal dinner parties engraved.

Decrease your Christmas list, as people who couldn't read the signature on your cards stop reciprocating.

Never again be able to look in the eye some people for whom you care, because you didn't write them condolence letters when you know you should have.

Consider the difference, in time spent and effect achieved, between performing such a simple task as thanking a hostess for a dinner by written and by nonwritten methods:

DEAR MISS MANNERS: Is it considered proper to send a "get well soon" card to a Christian Scientist?

GENTLE READER: Certainly. A Christian Scientist may disagree with you about treatment, but, as Miss Manners understands it, has no objection whatever to the prospect of getting well.

DEAR MISS MANNERS: What is your opinion of people who purposely leave the price tag on gifts in order for the giftee to be aware of the generosity of the gift?

GENTLE READER: That the least they can do is to scream as the person is opening the present, lean over and pull the price tag off, and drop it into a nearby ashtray, where it can be left to be examined at leisure by everyone.

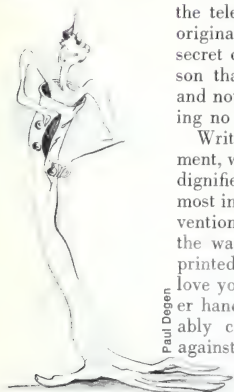


DEAR MISS MANNERS: What are "eighteen-button gloves"?

GENTLE READER: These are white gloves that come above the elbow and make a riveting show when the wearer slowly peels them off before she can take a drink. They are called "eighteen button" because they have three pearl buttons at each wrist.

DEAR MISS MANNERS: What is the etiquette for staff members of agencies such as the Department of Human Resources, hospitals, prisons, etc. when interviewed for an exposé?

GENTLE READER: The conventional procedure is to tell everything one knows at the time of the interview, and then to say afterward that one was quoted out of context.



Written version: grab clean paper, write, "Dear Olga-Marie: What a marvelous dinner that was. The bean-sprout soufflé was magnificent, and Sidney Mobile was as fascinating as you promised"; look for stamp, look up ZIP code, mail. Time: two minutes. Effect: hostess gets a touch of happiness among her bills.

Nonwritten version: dial telephone, hang up, work up pitch of anger over fact that line is busy, try again, have conversation:

Guest: *Hey, that was a terrific party last night.*

Hostess: *Well, I'm so glad you could come. (aside: I don't know, dear, somebody from last night. Be with you in a minute.)*

Guest: *It was just great.*

Hostess: *Thank you.*

Guest: *Thank you for asking me.*

Hostess: *Well, it was good to see you.*

Guest: *It was good to see you.*

Hostess: *Well, I'm so glad you could come.*

Guest: *Oh, I was delighted to. Say, there's something I've been meaning to ask you...*

Actually, there was nothing the guest was meaning to ask the hostess, having just spent the previous evening with her, but the guest can no longer bear the sound of his own inanities and doesn't know how to get off the telephone. Time: twenty minutes. Effect: hostess decides that wit apparent previous evening must be credited to her own wine cellar.

You may notice that the silly statements of the telephone conversation are really no less original than those of the letter. That is the secret of handwritten sentiments, and the reason that they are still considered necessary, and not just by finicky old snippets (mentioning no names).

Writing makes the most conventional statement, which would look dopey if printed, seem dignified. This is especially useful, as life's most important occasions are expressed in conventional phrases. Nobody ever felt cheered by the warmth of a card with "My Sympathy" printed in silver scrolls, or traced a typed "I love you" with a trembling finger. On the other hand, statements printed on T-shirts probably cannot be used in court as evidence against you.

IS IT TRUE that we now live in a world where there is more joy than sorrow? Miss Manners doesn't know how else to account for everyone's knowing how to wish fortunate people happiness, while expressing sympathy is so strange and frightening that many

people will choose the rudeness of silence rather than even attempt it.

Statistically, it turns out, as many people get married, die. In fact, more people die than marry although, unlike marrying, they tend to do it once and for all. Yet no one ever refuses to go to a wedding, crying pitifully as an excuse, "I just wouldn't know what to say."

As you know, Miss Manners requires you when someone you know has died, to write a letter of condolence to the family, attend the funeral or memorial service, and pay a formal visit to the family afterward. So she will tell you what to say.

Say, "I'm sorry." Or "I'm so sorry"—Miss Manners allows for individuality of expression. If you can't manage that much, simply press the person's hand, look meaningfully into their eyes (this is done by raising the eyebrow from the bridge of the nose) and arrange the lips in a weight-of-the-world smile (raise the central part of the closed mouth at the same time as the corners are slightly raised).

There is a great variety of interesting things not to say. There is practically no limit to what imaginative and ill-meaning people will think of to increase the suffering and impair the dignity of the bereaved.

For instance:

"It's all for the best."

"You mustn't carry on like this. She wouldn't have wanted you to grieve."

"Do you really think you ought to be going about like this—so soon after?"

"Oh, well, you'll soon have another child (marry again, meet someone else)."

"I'm surprised to see you've changed things about so. I should have thought you would have wanted to leave the house as it was while he was here."

"Of course you feel terrible. You must have all kinds of guilt feelings about what you could have said or done differently before it was too late. Would you like to talk to me about it?"

"I don't want to interfere, but I notice that you've let the children go back to their playgroup. Don't you think it's a little early?"

"You must feel just awful. I know you're being brave, but you can let it out with me. Go ahead, cry. It must be a terrible strain for you to act so matter-of-fact as you do."

"It's really much better this way. You wouldn't have wanted her to linger on and deteriorate, and this way you can remember her at the height of her youth."

"At least you had many years together. It's not like what happened to me."

"Of course, you can do what you want. But do you really feel it's respectful to the dead?"

"Oh, dear, *What can I say?*"

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY NIXON TAPES

overheard history

by Richard Holmes

HOW CLOSE can we really get to the ordinary men and women of the distant past? Can we know what they whispered about each day, and worried about each night? Can we catch the sound of their voices across the centuries? This is a question that has increasingly concerned modern historians like Lawrence Stone, Barbara Tuchman, and Richard Cobb, and it has led to the search for a new kind of documentary source that can take us more intimately into the *recherche du temps perdu*. The volumes of *The Lisle Letters*, dating from the mid-sixteenth century, published recently by the University of Chicago Press, offer one of the earliest sources of "eavesdropping" story ever discovered: to be compared with the seventeenth-century diaries of Samuel Pepys. But they offer something more: a revelation of the world of power politics that could be more properly compared to the Nixon tapes.

WE OWED the existence of the Lisle letters to a charge of conspiracy and high treason that first upon the head of a distinguished and unsuspecting Tudor diplomat one spring evening in London some 441 years ago: which turned out to be little more than the day before yesterday. Listen for a moment to the tale. In April 1540, King Henry VIII of England, dangerously divided between the beds of his fourth

and fifth wives, and between anti-Papist diplomatic alliances with France and the Habsburg Empire, recalled home to court one Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle, who had been serving for the past seven years as his lord deputy (or civilian governor) in Calais. The port of Calais, twenty-two miles across the Channel from Dover Castle, was the last English outpost on the continent: a garrison town, a hotbed of customs evasion and political intrigue. As the historian A. L. Rowse has written, sixteenth-century Calais was exposed "to all the winds of doctrine that blew, whether from France or the Netherlands, from Rome or the obscure recesses of Germany."

Lord Lisle was really too nice a

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Lord Lisle. The charge: high treason.

man for this sort of thing, and anyway close to retirement age. He was the illegitimate son of Edward IV, and thereby King Henry's elderly uncle on the wrong side of the blanket. His career had been marked largely by avuncular festive duties: he had been a member of Henry's Privy Chamber, an attendant at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and the Chief Panter at the wedding celebrations of poor Queen Anne Boleyn. He had served seven years in windy, woebegone Calais with great goodwill, and now he came home with a hopeful heart, modestly expecting an earldom, a small slice of monastic lands, and an honorable semiretirement to his estates in Hampshire and the West Country, with his wife, Honor Lisle, and his extensive family from their two previous marriages. He was an expatriate Englishman coming quietly home to his native land; English history had mercifully brushed him on the shoulder and passed him gently by.

Lisle briefly took his seat in the House of Lords, and then boated down the Thames to attend the King and his first minister, Thomas Cromwell, for the Whit Sunday jollifications. It was the same fateful route taken just four years previously by another trusted servant of the King, Sir Thomas More. What happened next is recorded in a secret dispatch by Marillac, the French ambassador in London, dated May 21, 1540.

Two days ago, at ten o'clock at night, my Lord Lisle, Deputy of

Calais, uncle of this King, was led prisoner to the Tower, where before had been committed three of his servants, and similarly today a chaplain of his who is come out of Flanders in a ship. The cause thereof hath not yet been so certified unto me that I can write it for truth; but it is bruited that he is accused of having had secret intelligence with the Cardinal Pole who is his near relative, and of other practices to deliver up to him the town of Calais. Howsoever it may be, the said Lord Lisle is in a very strait prison, and from the which none escape save by miracle.

Cardinal Reginald Pole, the detested nephew of the King, was based in Rome and credited with any subversive pro-Catholic scheme that Henry's spies could unearth. The charge thus involved heresy, treason, and family disloyalty, a lethal cocktail.

Back in Calais, with the terrifying speed and ruthless efficiency that characterized the Tudor state machine, Lisle's whole family, including Honor, was placed under house arrest. His goods were impounded "that afternoon, in the twilight," and a general seizure of his private papers and correspondence began. Nothing in the end was missed except a few love letters, written by one of his stepdaughters to a secret French fiancé, which were "cast into the jakes" (the toilet) by a servant girl at the very moment that the royal commissioners burst into the Lisle apartments. Ironically, this was the one act that could have seriously compromised Lisle, though it was utterly beyond his control.

All the rest—some 3,000 letters, written almost daily during the seven crucial years of Henry VIII's reign between March 1533 and April 1540 (both the letters from Calais and the replies from England), and covering every possible aspect of Tudor life, from the purchase of a red silk nightcap to the popular view of Anne Boleyn's adulteries—was assembled in a massive dossier for the sifting of the King's experts in treachery and disaffection, those twin obsessions of the Tudor monarchy. They were eventually filed

in eighteen manuscript volumes in the Public Record Office, where they survived fire, flood, and Hitler's blitz, to find their destiny in the hands of a remarkable British scholar of grass-roots history, Muriel St. Clare Byrne. Miss Byrne, now eighty-six, began work on her edition of the Lisle letters half a century ago. The project was commissioned by T. S. Eliot, who was an editor at the British publishing firm of Faber and Faber. By the time it finally appeared last year (with the University of Chicago Press as co-publisher), the project had grown to six volumes of letters and supporting documents. Altogether it amounts to nearly 4,000 pages, or close to two million words: a created world roughly equivalent to that of all Dickens's major novels.

HERE IS Miss Byrne's initial reaction to the inventory of Lisle's seized household goods, which to other historians might have been a mere lifeless list of chattels (twenty-one printed pages of it):

They make almost unbearable reading, these lists, stabbing the imagination with their meticulous, automatic enumerating of such things as "two old pieces of tapestry," "two old carpets," and "three old worn dripping pans." There is something at once pitiful and terrifying about their mechanical throwing open of cupboard doors upon the skeletons

etons of ostentation and carefulness, the gay apparel and the gorgeous jewels, the poor little shifts and the worn-out splendours... and the memories, the standing cup with H for Henry and A for dead and forgotten Anne Boleyn on its cover, the standing cup with Henry's Tudor rose and Katherine of Aragon's pomegranate badge.

The Lisle documents were known to Victorian scholars, but it took Miss Byrne to grasp their full historical significance. Without her labors, the Lisle family would have remained a tragic piece of flotsam in the Henrician revolution, immersed in the tidal movements of Tudor history: to break with the Roman Church, the dissolution of the monasteries, the creation of the Tudor bureaucracy, the rise and fall of great churchmen and ministers like Wolsey, More, and Cromwell, and the enduringly fabulous legend of Henry's six wives. Miss Byrne was the first to see not only that the Lisles were acute witnesses to much of this but that the virtue of their position in Calais (perched, as it were, just outside the court's window, anxious for every crumb of news) the letters written to them had equal, or even greater value. They form a matchless bibliography of Tudor prose, sparkling with life in a period described by C. S. Lewis as "the Drab and Transitional." They show the living language that Shakespeare was heir to.

[illegible]

From Lisle to his wife: attending to business.

or the letters written to Lisle and his wife come from all parts of English society: from privy councillors and archbishops; from country wives and yeoman farmers (on the estates back home); from bailiffs and chaplains, jailbirds and midwives. For seven precious years, a complete world comes back to life in speech.

BECAUSE OF Lisle's position, of course, that world is filled with many of the great names of Tudor history. Besides the king himself, constantly on the horizon like some brilliant summer storm, we glimpse at least four of his wives: Katherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, and Anne of Cleves.

The period 1533 to 1540 corresponds exactly with the rise and fall of Thomas Cromwell, the cold and clever architect of the new state. In any other (frequently doomed) ministries move before our eyes: the bishop Crammer of the Prayer Book; Sir Richard Riche, the senior solicitor-general; the poets Thomas Wyatt and Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey; and Princess Mary Stuart Bloody, who died with the loss of Calais [1558] engraved on her heart).

Yet for all their glamour, it is not these figures who dominate the correspondence. It is the little people: the captain who has lost his ship; the chaplain who has preached a dangerous sermon; the serving man who is unjustly thrown into jail; the old retainer who gives recipes or medical advice. One figure, especially, steps from anonymity right into Tudor history: Master John Husee, the Lisles' agent, estate manager, and matchless confidant. The collection includes no less than 515 of John Husee's letters, making him the choric voice of the whole drama. The son of a London merchant, in his mid-thirties, bachelored and self-styled gentleman, he is a born organizer of other people's affairs, and absolutely dedicated to the king and Honor—"Your lordship's own man bounden." "Your ladyship's own man." He is meticulous,

gossipy, observant, wise in the ways of "this wily world," and capable of turning his hand to any task, diplomatic or domestic.

Husee's exploits in the Lisle service frequently teeter on the edge of comic epic, or comic opera: a Tudor Figaro. He will extract the contents of a man's will before the will is read, or even before the man is dead (and then describe the death most movingly); he will curse the Abbot of Westminster, a noted *bon viveur*, in suitable style—"I would he had a tun of wine, and the cask, in his belly!"; he will wheedle away Honor's favorite pet dog, little Porky, because he knows it has caught another lady's fancy, and later replace it with a rare South American monkey.

HUSEE directs us into the heart of the Lisle letters, which is a theme straight out of Shakespeare's history plays: the exercise of power, influence, and personal affection in a dangerous world where no one is safe.

The outward sign of this is an astonishing, ceaseless carrying of gifts and remembrances to and from

friends, clients, businessmen, political allies, family relations, religious advisers, ancient retainers, and the great panjandrums of the Tudor state. There is scarcely a letter that does not mention some form of material benefit or bounty. Money itself was almost never sent. As Christopher Hill has observed, probably the nearest thing to ready cash was wine (just as tobacco still forms the ready currency of a modern closed hierarchy like the prison or penitentiary). Other favorite gifts included game, pies, spices and preserves, pet animals (the rarer the better), horses and armor, dress materials and jewels, and the famous cramp rings, blessed by the King against rheumatism and chronic ills. These gifts were more than Tudor eccentricities. They express the continuous functioning of the Tudor hierarchy of power. Their emphasis on the rare and strange and special is a recognition of the critical individuality of power. Being genuinely personal, they carry genuine goodwill, although it is frail and requires constant renewal.

The ultimate gifts in the King's power, of course, were land and position. Lisle's salary as deputy of



The port of Calais, a "hotbed of political intrigue."

Calais was negligible—perhaps £200 a year. What kept him going, through mounting debts and an inability even to pay his own household, was the promise of royal reward: land, gifts, new “rooms” or posts he could assign, and thus receive gifts for himself. Such a system explains a dominant characteristic of Tudor political life: that as personal wealth and prestige increased, personal security and expectation, being dependent on the King’s favor, grew more tenuous—terrifyingly so. Hence the vital importance of a man like John Husee, the go-between, the intelligencer (a word coined about 1580), the gift-presenter, the manipulator, the man who knows more than his master.

Here is Husee’s account of presenting Lisle’s New Year gift and greeting at court in January 1538, just over two years before his fall. He interprets every nuance of gesture or phrase, for each one carries perilous weight. (The lord privy seal is Cromwell; Sir Brian Tuke is the steely-eyed royal treasurer.)

I delivered on New Year’s Day your gift to the King’s Majesty in his own hands; and as soon as I was within the Chamber of Presence, going to present the same as accustomed, my Lord Privy Seal smiled and said to the King’s Grace, “here cometh my Lord Lisle’s man!”; and the King spake merrily unto him again, but what his Highness said I cannot tell. So that, after I had done my duty, his Grace received it of me smiling, and thanking your lordship did ask heartily how you and my lady did. His Grace spake few words that day to those that came. As far as I could perceive he spake to no man so much as he did unto me, which was no more words but this: “I thank my lord. How doth my lord and my lady? Are they merry?” It was gently done of my Lord Privy Seal to have your lordship in remembrance, setting the matter so well forward. The King stood leaning against the cupboard, perceiving all things; and Mr. Tuke at the end of the same cupboard, penning all things that were presented.... There was but a small Court.

It is but a small scene, yet an immensely telling one. History lives. We hear the King’s bluff laughter, and then the whispered joke (about Husee? about Lisle?). We see Husee practically counting the King’s words, and we listen, like him, for the faintest trace of sarcasm in the word “merry” (*too merry in Calais?*). We see how Cromwell has monopolized access to the King, and how he alone can “set matters forward.” We see the accountant’s quill pen, as much a symbol of the Tudor state as the headman’s ax, “penning all things.” We even catch a hint of the King’s lassitude and obesity, as he leans against the cupboard, casual but lethal: a slumbering tiger ready to spring.

HUSEE’S shrewdness of observation and political tact become Lisle’s most valuable weapon in the struggle for survival. He knows, for example, the danger of Lisle’s writing overlong letters to the King; and the absolute necessity of watching the shadows behind Cromwell. Most of all, he understands his own master’s greatest weakness: Lisle’s tendency

to be temperamental, to be thrown into panic or depression by any hint of official disfavor or criticism. It is too nice, too anxious not to give offense. This made Lisle especially vulnerable to Cromwell, who had perfected the art of pressuring his subordinates by unspoken threats, nuances of displeasure, meaningful silences, or sudden tiny cold splinters of criticism—his notorious “sharp letters—that slid beneath the skylight glass. “If your lordship had received such another letter,” wrote Husee bracingly to Lisle on one occasion, “I am well assured that you would not ‘a slept well in 7 night following!’”

In one celebrated instance Husee actually confronted Cromwell with one of these sharp letters to Lisle, and boldly informed the lord privy seal “that if his lordship did not to sooner write some other loving letter unto you [Lisle] that I stood in doubt that your Lordship might take such conceit [imaginary fear] thereon that might perchance put you in hazard of some disease or peril to your life.” One can almost see Cromwell’s narrow lips—in the famous Holbein portrait—draw back into a disarming, deadly smile: “he answered and said that he thought your Lordship was wiser than to take after any such manner; for whatever he wrote, he was and is and would remain still your Lordship’s sincere and very friend.”

Part of the fascination of this interview is that it takes place between the second most powerful man in the kingdom and an ordinary citizen, nobody who, apart from the master he serves so faithfully, is a cipher, a walk-on part in the conventional drama of history. Yet Husee and Cromwell talked, argued, even joked after a fashion (though he had spent “half the day in seeking of him”) and that is history too. Thanks to Miss Byrne we can still hear it as it really happened. If we were Frenchmen we would surely find a philosophical distinction to make about this: between *l’histoire apprise*, the history as it is normally learned at school, and *l’histoire surprise*, the overheard history. The Lisle letters are overheard history *par excellence*.



Thomas Cromwell: unspoken threats and meaningful silences.

The Granger Collection

BUT WE must end with our tale. Husee warned Lisle three years before his fall that anything to do with heresy, renegade preachers, or religious heterodoxy at Calais must be eaten like gunpowder. Regarding church matters, he cautions Lisle, "be no less earnest and precise than you would be in causes of high reason." Lisle, the genial, aging, anxious administrator—who was not much concerned with religion anyway, except that his wife inconveniently favored the "old" Papist rituals—would have been only too happy to oblige. But in the Tudor state, events easily outstripped men and all their contrivances.

1540 was one of the deadliest years for Tudor career-makers, riddled only by 1536, when Anne Boleyn's fall dragged so many with her to the block. Not only was Lisle suddenly incarcerated in the Tower, but his opposite number in Dublin, Leonard, Lord Grey, deputy of Ireland, was recalled, arrested, and—black augury—summarily executed. The most shattering blow, however, was the fate of My Lord Privy Seal himself. After a long battle in Council throughout the spring of 1540, Cromwell apparently consolidated his position. He was created Earl of Essex in April, at the very moment Lisle's recall. But Cromwell's safety was no less than Lisle's, was illusory. In June he was arrested on charges of heresy and expropriation, and on July 28 he was beheaded with little ceremony on the lawns within the Tower, probably within earshot of Lisle. His last letter to the King, abandoning all his wonted coolness and icy circumspection, begged for mercy, mercy, mercy. "He was indeed guilty of, among many other things, pro-Lutheran leanings and joining the 'Sacramentaries' (who alligned the conservative doctrine of transubstantiation in the Mass): he had been many such in Calais. This sequence of events has naturally led historians to suppose that he was himself dragged down in a general attack on Cromwell, ostensibly for administrative incompetence and for not enforcing religious heterodoxy among the fractious gar-

rison and townfolk of Calais, just as Husee had feared. But the facts are far stranger and more ironic. The appalling truth seems to be that Cromwell ("your very friend") framed Lisle. In a desperate last attempt to defend his position against his religious right-wing enemies in Council, Cromwell used the machinations of Lisle's chaplain in Rome to discredit Lisle's entire administration in Calais. He thereby hoped to cover up his own involvement in protecting the Sacramentaries (or left wing) in Calais. Cromwell alone knew that old Lisle was perfectly innocent; perhaps he even meant to save him when the danger was past. But then the mantrap closed on his own head. The details are complex and fascinating, but what emerges in the end is a terrible and convincing picture of Cromwell ruthlessly and vainly sacrificing Lisle to the royal fury. The letters between Lisle's stepdaughter and her French lover added a final twist: that they were hastily disposed of at the time of arrest could mean only one thing to the Tudor mind—treason. So one more Tudor family fell, public life destroying private, power annihilating human trust.

THE administration changed in Calais, then, but the ax did not fall in London. Ambassador Marillac, reporting Cromwell's demise, noted perplexedly: "As to the other prisoners, people know not what to say except that there is good hope as regards the Deputy of Calais, of whom the King has said he could not think the Deputy erred through malice but rather through ignorance." It still sounded perilously like an epitaph. For eighteen months the position hung in the balance. We would give anything to know Husee's frantic efforts on behalf of his beloved master: but there are no further letters. Miss Byrne observes that Mistress Anne Basset, Honor Lisle's daughter, remained a favored lady at Henry's Court against all odds, and it is impossible not to imagine Husee's skillful, ever-faithful hand guiding Anne's conduct and making her bide her time.

Then, in February 1541, accord-

ing to the account of a Welsh chronicler, Elis Gruffudd (yet another of Miss Byrne's documentary discoveries), the following poignant incident took place:

The next Friday the King's Grace moved down the river in his barge from York Place to Greenwich, and at the time Lord Lisle his uncle, who was a bastard of King Edward IV, raised his hands high, and shouted hoarsely from the Tower where he was imprisoned for mercy and release from prison. The King took it graciously and sent his secretary to the Tower to the Lord to show him the King had given him his pardon and that he would have his freedom and release from prison two or three days later and that he would get back his possessions and offices.

It is an extraordinary scene. Old Lisle up on the "leads" of the Tower (where privileged prisoners could exercise); the King's barge floating down the wintry Thames beneath its forbidding walls; the voices echoing across the chilly waters between them. It almost reenacts, as in a pageant play, Lisle's whole career in Calais—exiled across the estranging sea from his King. Perhaps John Husee had planned the whole scene: "Be sure, my lord, to be up on the roof betimes . . ." Who knows?

But that something like this did indeed happen, we can be certain, for Ralph Holinshed, the British chronicler, corroborates the royal pardon, and adds the detail that it was sealed with a gift—the last of so many that fill the Lisle story. It was a ring, and "a rich diamond, for a token from him, and to tell him to be of good cheer." Miss Byrne quotes the genealogist Francis Sandford about what happened next. The night following Lisle's receipt of Henry's gift, his heart was so "overcharged" with joy that "he yielded up the Ghost; which makes it observable that this King's Mercy was as fatal as his Judgements." Lord Lisle's body, Sandford goes on to say, "was honourably buried in the Tower of London."

But not his letters. And not their voices. □

DOWN WITH IDEAS

Nabokov's strange view of literature

by Joel Agee

NABOKOV the teacher lectured the way Nabokov the author gave interviews: reading from a text that not only addressed itself to the question at hand but supplied jokes, digressions, lyrical flourishes, and charming asides to make up as thoroughly as possible for the complete absence of spontaneity in his delivery. So great was Nabokov's fear of the unprepared statement ("I think like a genius," he explained, "I write like a distinguished author, and I speak like a child") that one is surprised not to find interspersed in his lecture notes indications of when to interrupt the talk with an impromptu cough or a sip from a glass of water.*

A mind so distrustful of its own

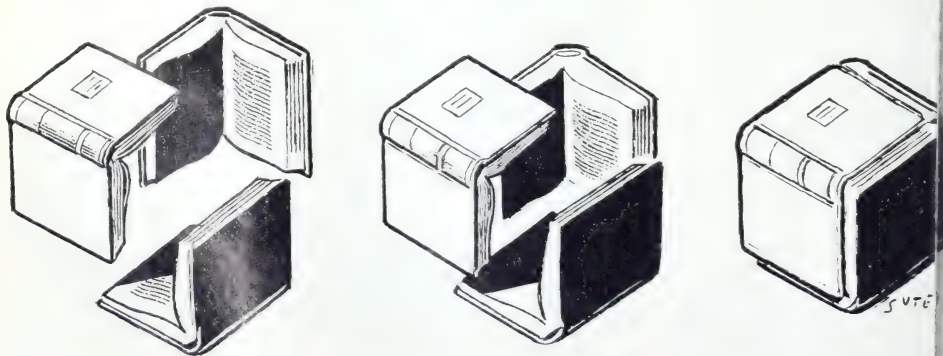
naïvely bubbling essence and so bent on dressing its every public appearance in a glittering costume of unimpeachably Nabokovian words is likely to be acutely observant of the verbal habits of others and rather heedless of the body of thought or the gesture of spirit that is concealed in these habits. Of Turgenev, for example, Nabokov remarks that when he "sits down to discuss a landscape, you notice that he is concerned with the trouser-crease of his phrase; he crosses his legs with an eye upon the color of his socks"—a beautifully accurate observation and a characteristically humorous and lucid phrase; but in the absence of any examination of that passionate ideologue's opinions or those of his characters, the remark resembles a

society columnist's discussion of the First Lady's leopard-skin pillbox hat when the real occasion was her husband's announcement of a political statement.

STYLE, and style alone, makes the artist for Nabokov. For this reason he can teach us a great deal about the fabric and texture and cut and fit of each writer's prose: Tolstoy's manner of "peeling the apple of the phrase," building up repetitions as he gropes for a meaning he hasn't completely divined; Gorky's fatal attraction to the lurid effect and the ready-made phrase; Gogol's method of yanking the rational plane of discourse at from under the reader's feet in mid-sentence, then sending him off in a lyrical glide to the next temporary foothold on sanity and order; Ce-

* Vladimir Nabokov, *Lectures on Russian Literature and Lectures on Literature*, edited by Fredson Bowers; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, both \$19.95.

Joel Agee is the author of *Twelve Years: An American Boyhood in East Germany*, published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux.



ov's "faintly iridescent verbal hazi-
is"; the occasional brilliantly lan-
id phrase in Turgenev, "like a
ard sun-charmed on a wall..."
Not that the prose needs to be
shy to win the professor's ap-
val, but there must be evidence
careful tailoring and of good
te. Chekhov, whom he admires, is
first identified as a downright
lby sort of writer, with a style
t "goes to parties clad in its every-
suit." What, then, accounts for
beauty of his plays and stories?
w does he surpass the guys with
pressed slacks, the proud pro-
ers of "the purple patch, the juicy
b, the hothouse adjective, the
me-de-menthe epithet"? (Nabo-
r's own choice of words fairly
ces us to include him among the
i-Chekhovian fancy-dancers.) "He
it," Nabokov explains, "by keep-
all his words in the same dim
it and of the same exact tint of
y, a tint between the color of an
fence and that of a low cloud."
Chekhov was a natty dresser after
Elegantly, *fastidiously* simple—
those dandies who keep their
es scuffed on purpose.

he false note almost passes by
noticed, so perfectly definitive are
se two gray props, but a false
e it is: the claim that formal con-
and cunning aesthetic strategy
by themselves account for the
pression of artistic beauty?" in
khov's or any substantial artist's
k. This notion pervades the en-
book as a kind of critical leit-
if. John Updike, in his introduc-
to the first volume of Nabo-
ov's lectures on western Euro-
n literature, cites a student's sum-
ion of what she understood to be
okov's "central dogma": "Style
structure are the essence of a
k; great ideas are hogwash." Of
rse "great ideas" are hogwash,
ideas are not in and of them-
es hogwash, and Nabokov's dis-
p for ideas in fiction—it almost
unts to disgust—makes him a
than adequate reader of some of
favorite works: Chekhov's "In the
ine," for example, where he gives
attention to evil Aksinia's snake-
appearance but ignores the cor-
ing influence of real and counter-

feit money, and completely passes
over the theme of industrial pollu-
tion. One gets the impression that
Nabokov does not want to banish
ideas as such from the kingdom of
fiction (he accepts without question,
for instance, Tolstoy's views on spir-
itual salvation in "The Death of Ivan
Ilyich") but more particularly ideas
that might please a Marxist; that he
wants to spare himself and his
students the embarrassment of taking
seriously an author's perception of
poverty and the ravages of wealth.*

NONE OF the nineteenth-cen-
tury Russian writers he dis-
cusses shared Nabokov's
formalist and hermeticist
theory of literature—they would
probably have found it abhorrent—
and this fact alone puts him at a
remove from them that is roughly
the equivalent of the distance be-
tween a Degas or a Delacroix and
an M. C. Escher. But in no case is
the gulf wider than between Chekhov
and Nabokov. I am convinced of
this, despite the kinship an eminent
student of Chekhov, Simon Kar-
linsky, sees between the two, and
despite Nabokov's reverent fondness
for Chekhov.

Nabokov does not understand what
is most significant, and at the same
time most obvious, in Chekhov. He
misses it even though he puts his
finger on it, or near it, briefly, be-
fore passing on to the weirdly self-
descriptive assertion that Chekhov
exhibited "perfect contempt" for var-
ious devices favored by "ordinary"
writers. Chekhov, he says, told his
stories "the way one person relates
to another the most important things
in his life, slowly and yet without a
break, in a slightly subdued voice."
A person who writes this way—a
person, not a littérateur—is not ven-
triloquizing and prestidigitating, is
not trying to keep "my circles, my
special islands, infinitely safe from
exasperated readers" (a practice
Nabokov ascribes to himself in *Strong
Opinions*); and the "slightly sub-
dued voice" commands our atten-

* There ought to be a word for this
political blushing syndrome. How about
"sinistrophobia"?

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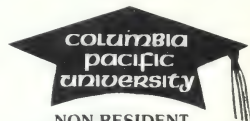
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tion because it is actually addressing us, in the real world, not in the echoing halls of a construct, and because it conveys such a marvelous balance between ruthless objectivity and unconditional pity. I don't believe a writer could understand and love Chekhov and boast at the same time, as Nabokov did in an interview, that "my characters cringe as I come near with my whip."

The trouble with Nabokov's criticism is the trouble with his novels: he puts too much stock in the concept of genius as virtuosity, literature as a conjurer's trick. And because he prides himself on his residence in the ivory tower and recommends it to all would-be writers ("provided of course it has a telephone and an elevator"), he will not admit that the lasting vitality of plays like *The Lower Depths* and novels like *Dead Souls* derives from their authors' passionate immersion in what Nabokov refers to as "so-called real life." He goes searching for method and strategy even in Tolstoy, who was surely the least stylish, least self-consciously scheming novelist imaginable. And though he admits that Tolstoy performed his miracles casually, without conscious design, he finds it necessary to roll out a dazzlingly intricate account of the clock times and dates that are mentioned in *Anna Karenina*, as if the cross section of an oak could "rationalize the delight" we experience in contemplating the whole, living tree in its immeasurable complexity, harmony, strength, and beauty.

THERE IS something of the sterile grace of chess puzzles in the diagrams and analyses scattered throughout the two volumes of Nabokov's lectures (though his prose always adds wit and sparkle). Nabokov may in fact have invented pedantry as an art form. Some of these miniature studies are charming, like the taxonomic exercise of trying to determine the precise species of the unfortunate bug Gregor Samsa turned into; others seem pointless and trivial, except as heuristic devices, like the layouts he provides of Dr. Jekyll's

house, Mansfield Park, and the Samsas' apartment, or the cartographic excursions through the many streets of Bloom's and Stephen Dedalus's Dublin, or the exhaustive analysis of the sleeping-car arrangements on the train to St. Petersburg in *Anna Karenina*.

When I first heard of this unusual method of zeroing in on the heart of a novel, I thought it amusing and original, and imagined it must have served a therapeutic purpose in a classroom populated by young minds made woozy by the symbol-divining sort of book discussion (Was Moby Dick: a. a penis, b. the Caucasian race, c. Melville's mother, d. a whale? Check one); but after seeing the excess to which Nabokov went in trying to track down the meandering paths of this or that writer's imagination, and after examining the invariably banal results—in each case little more than a map, a list, a sketch, a collection of historiographical droppings—I began to suspect in this strange activity the blind burrowing of an obsession.

Here, admittedly, we are in danger of venturing into territory that has been sternly designated as out of bounds, *verboden*, *zapreshchyon*, by the Master himself: it's not for nothing he pillories famous Freud in so many of his novels and warns in his prefaces that "as usual . . . the Viennese delegation has not been invited." There is a similar bristling interpolation inserted in his discussion of Tolstoy: "I hate tampering with the precious lives of great writers and I hate Tom-peeping over the fence of those lives—I hate the vulgarity of 'human interest,' I hate the rustle of skirts and giggles in the corridors of time—and no biographer will ever catch a glimpse of my private life"—after which he immediately proceeds to savage Dostoevsky with an ad hominem punch for "leading a life extremely removed from his teachings." No such trespass is implied by my use of the word "obsession." I merely wish to make the pedestrian observation that when someone repeatedly does something strenuous that gets him nowhere, he must be after something he thinks is important. The question is, what?

ONE TELLING clue is the nature of the things he ignores. He focuses on the skills and mechanics of lifelike description in Tolstoy, but doesn't note of his uncanny power of empathy, the impression one gets that Tolstoy can inhabit the bodies of men, women, dogs, horses, even plants. In the process of snubbing Gorky, he overlooks the gift for intimate and accurate portrayal that produced his masterful *My Childhood* and a splendid collection of literary memoirs. He dismisses Dostoevsky's philosophical courage as vast emotional range as insupportably vulgar melodrama. Nor does he once mention Chekhov's refusal to condemn even the most vicious of his characters. What all these various talents and qualities have in common is that Nabokov lacked them. Nothing reprehensible in that; he was other gifts in abundance, no one could be all things to all men, but still what prevents a man from recognizing the gifts of others?

I think Nabokov was hunting for genius: the genius of others but especially his own; that he tried to catch it in the butterfly net of structural and stylistic analysis, just a few years later he tried to trap it forever in the labyrinthine construction of *Pale Fire* and *Ada*; that he honestly believed his own brilliant but circumscribed talent for paradoxical wordplay, and puzzle construction was the real thing, or else, by the persona of exiled genius knowingly as a mask. Part of the act, in any case, consisted of verbal gestures, pratfalls, and stances calculated to create the illusion of his, Nabokov's sublime elevation above such noxiousities as Balzac and Cervantes, his special-delivery messengers as Marcel Faulkner, and Camus, such noxiousities as Sartre and Gorky, not to mention trash like Dostoevsky. Because he projected his own meanness and personality against writers who were utterly different from him, as kind as well as in stature, Nabokov is a misleading guide to the understanding of men and of work to whom the term "genius" is just applied.

HARPER'S/JANUARY 1981

THE EVANGELIST

Old and Old Glory

by Alexander Theroux

IT WILL be a church, this one I'm taking you to, with a high white steeple (its weathervane a metal cricket: has anybody ever figured out one out?) reaching above a taste, box-shaped affair surrounded, ways, by a scrubby, asymmetrical row of chinaball trees. You read its militic menu out front:

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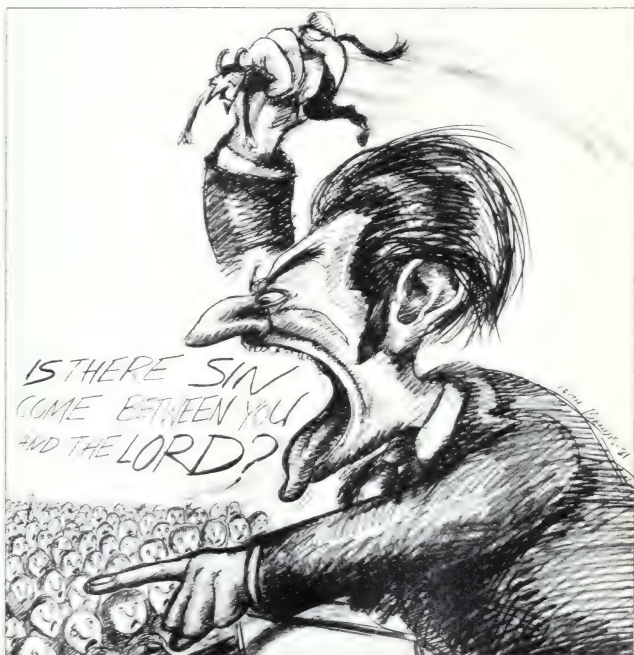
The state is Virginia, the day is today, the weather is warm, and the congregation is green collar, fundamentalist, and, well, let's say none of them had sat up the previous night reading Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, okay?

Truthfully, however, neither had I. It was your first visit to the church, after all, and, added up (a glimpse of Stonewall Jackson's annotated Bible, tallow dipping in Williamsburg, the Monticello you'd much preferred on the nickel, etc.), rather drained you. And so, having looked into one of those quaint little tourist homes, which are always efficiently run by two soap-faced marrieds, age fifty, who, with arms tucked, white ankle socks, and square thumbs, are always exercising to and fro at dusk in an unvoiled porch, you turned in early, remem-

bering only that you snorted up once out of a fully dressed half-sleep to catch the screen of the television you'd left on sputtering from a network of horizontal lines into a sickeningly white picture that, idiosyncratically, endowed the last scenes and fadeout of a grade-C western (cacti, setting sun, receding cowpoke), an aspirin ad, and the two o'clock headline newscast with a

perpetual snowstorm. And was that all? You wish.

At that instant, morning devotions—*Nitey Nite Necessities*—wedged itself into the television screen, a quiet organ *Schlummerlied* in the background supplying inspiration, while an aggrieved clerical demivir dropped, ripe as a medlar, into the nasty little orchard of your head. Looking up from his busy ministerial



Alexander Theroux's most recent book is *Conville's Cat*, published by Doubleday.

desk (methodically messy, a cardboard library behind him), he took off his spectacles—always a presage of candor: has anybody ever figured that one out?—and immediately began gasconading about this here being the free-est country on earth and, friend, the most decent. This assertion he underscored with the unusually colorful heresies, explicitly implied, that Christ had signed the Declaration of Independence, kept a commemorative place in His heart for Stone Mountain, translated Robert E. Lee's horse Traveller to the reaches of Heaven, and was temporarily living in Prayerville, Tennessee (not uncoincidentally the preacher's hometown), where, carpentering a new church, He might be very, very pleased if one morning (you pick it, neighbor) He sauntered down the hill to find five dollars tucked into his RFD mailbox, making Him so all-fired happy just to imagine the ten-penny nails, weatherproof siding, and maybe the new plumb bob that might thankfully buy, hear? And ten dollars would buy *twice* as much! And twenty, why *four* times that! An address for mailing, superimposed on a waterfall, was flashed, after, that is, those of us in televisionland (O, so very far from Prayerville, Tennessee!) had been exhorted and re-exhorted to secure a pencil.

Groping desperately for the off knob, you were summarily brought up by the polychromatic envoi: the preacher swung open a Bible marked by his thumb, raced through a text, kissed the page, and then, with head lowered, slowly metamorphosed into a flapping Old Glory on which was superimposed a montage, in sequence, of the rising sun, cumulus clouds, the Lincoln Memorial, murmuring pines and hemlocks, a squadron of jets, the fruited plains, the Grand Canyon, a two-headed tiny licking a raindrop from her nose, grannies-at-prayer, and, finally, the Raising of the Flag at Iwo Jima, this accompanied all the while by the crescendo of an out-of-tune choir humming "I Love to Steal Awhile Away," after which a thunderclap and then the basso profundo voice of God the Father demoting from on high, "I Am With You Always,

Even Unto the End of the World."

You snapped off the television set. You can admit this, now. You began to wonder about God, right?

BUT DON'T blame Him. He had nothing to do with it, if you want the truth of the matter—a conviction I can't help but believe was increasingly yours as you walked one beautiful Sunday morning into the main aisle of the Wyanooid Baptist Church only to find staring at you from the reserved seats up front a group that looked less like the officials of a church synod than the botched supernumeraries from the Bosch "Ecce Homo": a row of Elders, civic leaders, enthusiastic Jaycees, dishlicking Hutterites, haloed antilogicalists, Schmalkaldies, turdicants, and proto-Puritans swollen with the honor of wardenship. Small anodyne came in the name of music. A choir roared into the wondrous "My Lord Our Pinkies Nice Can Tweak." The service began.

"May the Lord love you *reeeeal* good!"

It was the semiheartfelt, if unsyntactical, wish of welcome boomed over a microphone by a jug-eared rapscallion with a woefully carpentered hairstyle, a neon raspberry shirt, and a string tie.

"I come up here"—the hominid actually wiped his nose on his arm!—"I come up here in front of all you good folks and feller Christians of this here parish, paid for by its affiliates, to welcome you to this here sixth doorbuster National American Revival, is what it is, with the world-famous man, evangelist, and pastor of the Southside Outreach Association, Inc., Dr. W. C. Cloogy, who you going to see in jess a minute, but first—"

Doctor? Well, yes, where are you without a title? You may resent this little bit of self-aggrandizement, in fact, but what preacher, teacher, or sinister minister could ever course among his flock peddling his exegetical guesswork without the security of some kind of honorific unfurled above himself like an umbrella? Doctor was the favorite. Reverend would do. Saint was too pretentious, Kalo-

kagathiate not true. Arch-rabbi was impossible, Mistery just about. And, finally, Metropolitan had a European sound.

"—but first, folks, I want y'all to give your whole, undivided attention there to pretty Miss April Springlove, all the way over here from Cibber, Va., aren't ya, honey. Her curtsy confirmed it.

Miss April Springlove, a girl's excessive beribbonment in her early twenties, blew out on her trumpet the old winner "He Touched Me," blushed, and skipped into the wind. A football star from the Cincinnati Bengals (30" neck, 5½ hat) loomed to the podium and said it might sound corny but he was lonesome for Jesus, a remarkable heresy convening the orthodox argument that He is everywhere, but one had little time to reflect on this, what with the swift entrance of the Marvy Twos—male regulars—who swayed and harmonized to the favorite, "The Flame on My Wick Is Bright." At night," the last chorus of which he hummed while the other narrated a poem about motherhood from an anniversary greeting card. Then, former dipsomaniac second-grade schoolteacher, choking back the tears—"witnessing"—told her story. Cloogy helped her, about a spinfit she once threw, God forgive her, when she forced an unruly seven-year-old to eat a whole jar of mucilage and to pink erasers. A high-school boy in a wheelchair was pushed out on stage to recite a snatchet from Isaiah. *Watts's Felicity:*

*No, 'tis in vain to seek for bliss
For bliss can ne'er be found
'Till we arrive where Jesus is,
And tread on heav'nly ground....*

The showcase widened. An octogenarian, garbed out in an American Legionnaire costume, was led out to wave just before what was clearly an imminent cardiac arrest, or, nevertheless, that would proudly enroll him in the Army of Heaven. A dwarf appeared and spoke in tones the supernatural aspect of which was heightened by his lisp. And the speaker, just previous to Dr. Cloogy's appearance, belonged to one LeRoy, billed as, and generally so,

nized to be, W. C. Cloogy's "best end." (It might be pointed out re that an evangelist always has ch a Panza-like buddy: it implies *icitia*, a disposition to gregariousness, and cuts down for the ensainted eacher on the inevitable speculation in the presence of wives cause.) A id of swagman and amiable boy iday, he sang in one of those clascal, out-of-fashion voices a medley laxatives touching on the Jordan, nd men coming home, rolls being led Up Yonder, golden slippers, ing Mysterious Strangers (age rty-three!), chariots swinging low, d Columbia, the Gem—as the famus mixed metaphor has it—of the ean, these interspersed, narrarely, with a whole didactic mess of 'hy, Daddy?" stories, criminal-is-and-saintly-moms stories, them-turns stories, instant-conversion ries, money-can-never-make-you-ppy stories (always a signal for collection), and a whole rosary patriotic tales.

The Americanistic pitch, it's common knowledge, was old hat in the ole circuit, as were subterranean ility fears common—two blowsy le bedfellows, interchangeable, ich could never fail to animate the ling evangelicalite and ignite in i the recurrent dream in which sees himself, in full color and mascope, a lantern-jawed, benadened U.S. Marine leaping over affle in order to beat the living out of the Devil, who, widespread the assumption, uses Chanel, aks Russian, and carries a purse.

ATTENTION now, Lies and German"—it was the quiddling in the string tie, raising his eyes like Enoch Transd—"will y'all welcome the shepherd of you sheep, God's chosen ister and," he winked cutely, e best dang li'l ol' buddy around, W. C. Cloogy!" The star appeared in the east wing, and then he rumbled out, threw his arms, and deblattered:

The text for today, brothers and sisters, is: "Those who feasted in dainties perish in the streets." *The Book of Lamentations, 4:5.*

A spate of coughs. Pertussic, nervous, the now-we're-getting-down-to-business type.

Death! Utter that blackest of words, neighbors, speak its two little syllables than which, dear, dear brethren, nothin'll give you the fantods quicker, hear? Eyes closed, ears deaf, lips silent, hands palsied, fanny stopped up! O God, help! O God, rescue! O! O! O! Perish? A fancy way of sayin' something that means death, spelled different, that's all, don't be a fool, and ain't never been a soul tumblin' through them gates of eternity but wadn't first a li'l heap of trash, like a dang dourmouse, see? Ol' Death, why he gonna jerk you up, boy! And what the deuce am I gettin' at confabulatin' with y'all up here this here Sunday of a mornin' That you get saved, mister, or don't come runnin' to me, 'cause ain't nobody no how better plan on eatin' hot cornbread 'n' shoofly pie fo'ever, 'cause you gonna die, boy, die, die, you with me? Everybody from figpecker to philosopher gonna dah! Hosea 9:7. Snap, poof, now how you like that and, tell me now, are you right with the Lord?

W. C. Cloogy, *Doctor Fundatus*, a charming and resourceful theological illiterate, was fat as a Fugger: a bun, a ham, a burgher. He looked like Ulrich Zwingle: a nose like a doorknob, round and brassy, poked out of an odd turnip-shaped head sprouting hair that was swept back into a frank but duncial shape, and under his hooded eyelids two distrustful eyes constantly shifted, black and snapping like a jackdaw's. He hamfistedly fussbudgeted back and forth in a suit the color of guano, wagging a finger and trooping out his docketts, posits, and quiddits like a costermonger his pippins.

The congregation whuffed appreciatively, their Demosthenes, they felt, being as brilliant an orator as the Pnyx had ever cheered. Most of the people sat nonintrospectively upright, stiff as pipes, but others, perhaps reaffirming the idea that the human mind is more easily unhinged in matters of divinity than anything else, began jerking back and forth

like woodpeckers. A few wept. One or two *tremebundi* were knotted up in prayer, like frogs poised for a jump. There was the sprawler, the huncher, the croucher, the percher, the squatter, and one lady, either daft or in the "rapture"—the boundaries touch—was coiled around in the side aisle and flapping in an *arc de cercle*, the characteristic posture of the hysteric.

It was a *limbus fatuorum* of devotees: arteriopath; tiny bird-headed clerks in suspenders and white socks; diehards from the Urban District Council; underscullions, with faces like knives; tobacco farmers, their necks cracked and veneered red by sun and wind; gimp widows with applepandowdy faces; various paralytic; monorhinals; crofters with toothless Punch and Judy profiles; and the little foxes who spoil the vines, teratogenic kids with wide mouths and round simpleton faces and water-parted hair.

Is there sin come between you and the Lord, friend? You vaporin' with the Lord, mister and sister? Well, on the day of the Great Dividin', Jack, you'll be pawnin' your crispin pins, fancy duded-up hats, fine linen, big-city suits, mantles, wimples, and you name whatall from the Montgomery Ward, Matthew 10:9, and why, you ask? I'll tell you, go no farther 'n here. Why just to buy your greedy little self one li'l ol' minute from Hell's black flames, but too late, because by then the Fahrenheit will have shot through the nipple of the thermometer and be scorchin' out your spatchcock and gizzards, which'll be worse if you take liquor 'cause that catches!

This was a rhetoric that would have taxed Quintilian himself. Like all evangelists, Cloogy spilled out his ratty alongside thinking and bespoke the omnipotent law in the trashiest piffle and most intolerable sankey-moodian bit of fustian since the days of thundering Whitfield, circulating Summerfield, and weeping Payson. The evangelist is foremost a denunciator, who, in assuming he is preaching from a fishing smack dead center in the Sea of Galilee or sending the Divine Word through the

thick Pauline bars of the Mamertine dungeon, has argued himself into a state of such broad magisterial cheek that he is virtually, worshipfully, beyond all human error.

The evangelist pulls no stops as, before you, he pumps and wheezes and bellows. He hops, capricornified, across the podium, glaring. He drives his fist down through the air as if knocking, pegwise, metaphorical demons. Barging up to the proscenium, he flings up his hands and with cheek-shaking fury lets himself loose in a jumped-up clatter of puns, clenches, abstersives, corrosives, cephalalgicks, and apophlegmaticks. It's all advertisement, no news: the staged "shattered" voice, moistened with sobs; the s's altered to th's; the farm analogy; the whining rhetorical question; the democratic thlipsis; the faraway look on the radiant face on the glorious horizon; the bird-perch finger, wagging; the forty-eleven anecdotes about children; and, of course, the machine-gun proof-texting.

It really cracks my acorns to hear about all them misfits unafraid of death who don't give a pin's fee for the Lord Jesus, born in the winter of the year 1, died in the Spring of 33. Joshua ben Joseph they called Him back then, bein' too dangbusted eeliterate to know He was callin' Himself by the name Jesus, El Shaddai if you want to be fancy, which I don't. Go ahead, smoke yourself into fidgets! Coat your belly with the devil's drink! Pinch up your waist in calico, half nekkid, and take your love to town under them bright city lights and honkytonks. Sirach 34:4. Mercy! O mercy, mercy me! But know this, you nasty li'l trapes, come the last trump of thunder, you'll have no wheel to spin, no loom on which to weave, no sickle to harvest with, no well sweep with which to draw up preshuss water! And what a scouring then! What an upturn-in! Lordy, what a dee-molition!

The voice is always pitched high, strident, like the hellish sounds of Virgil's Alecto, belted right from the chest, resonant as a bass drum and delivered with moments of connip-

tion. The congregation now sits petrified, fixated, no longer rubbernecking around at the neo-funeral home decor: the buckets of ferns and tubs of potted cycads, the fake stained glass, the hundred-foot neon cross tastefully arranged on the ceiling, the high rostrum at the front which held in its sacred place a gigantic red-leathered Bible, its purple silk pagemaker hanging out of it like a weary tongue. In fact, the church is no longer the alliterative little gingerbread house they'd earlier attended—"Fellowship Forum," "Cathedral of Tomorrow," "The Tinky-Toy Prayer Tower," "Holy Ghost Pye Mission," "Bethel of Blessings," etc.—but now rather like the cavernous, crag-hung house of Roderick Usher, ready to slide downward into Hell! Hell! Hell!

O, poo, that wouldn't be much fun.

Too true, but, see, it can be avoided.

NOT TWO seconds after W. C. Cloogy tried to scare the juice back into your vas deferens duct, he strode magnanimously forward and just minutes, presumably, before his Bethany-like Ascension, made available his pouchable goods, sundries, pigges' bones, holy reliques. The purchases, came the assurance, were all both indestructible and tax-deductible.

Everyone, before the offer ended or had run out, could have the following: a glossy snapshot of Pastor Cloogy riding a dromedary across the Plains of Sharon (\$1.25); The Marvy Twins' LP album *Hymns for Her*, featuring the much requested national hit "My Dropsy Cured One Night It Was" (\$7.95); cigarette lighters with a microdot of Mount Vernon on the flint (@\$6.50); a holy tablecloth featuring Ishbosheth, King of Israel, Being Assassinated (\$5); the classic book of spiritual guidance, *Raisins From My Bun*, by Dr. W. C. Cloogy (40¢); stone pie-lettes nicked from the Rock of Ages, glued to a card underneath the legend "America, Right or Wrong" (\$2); and—it will be pointed out here, by way of footnote, that the evangeli-

cal mind is obsessed with bowel regularity, a matter, surely, that warrants further study—packets of lenitive powders ground from Palestinian pistachio nutshells for the stringent (\$5.75 for twelve).

There were free hams, an offering to those, however, who made purchases of over twenty dollars or those whose contributions fulfilled the annual tally, the equation which had been worked out in terms of age, sum, and dedication; there were, for example, Soul Winners (\$500), Prayer Warriors (\$300), Scripture Seekers (\$100), and Year-Arounds (\$50, or two weeks free parish work per year). A spate of little bald men with isosceles-shaped feet hustled down the aisle and collected the chits the devotees signed to collect their purchases later. The choir sang "If You Take Ten Steps Toward Jesus, He'll Take Ten Steps Toward You." A soldier, motion for it, perfervidly explained the wicketing eyes why we should go back and bomb Vietnam. And then Father Cloogy trucked out on his moose-like feet, raised his fists, and roared reasonably:

On your deathbed, or, well pallet, same as bed only narrower, you ain't gonna hear nothin' not the thrum of the harp, not the carol of a bird, not the howl of a coon, not the whoooooole doxology of congregations—doxology a big-city word for praise and glory, nothin' more—so be warned, you shutwallets and tithin' nigglers. Listen to me! I there sin come between you and the Lord? Are you man enough to kneel right down here with me and pray? I want every man, woman, boy, and girl to lift their hand high if they want Jesus to come hoppin' into their filthy hearts. Lift them high! Up, c'mon high, hah! I can't see them, wid ow ladies, shut-ins, peckerwoods! High! How many of you out there can't lift his hand? O! O! O! Tragic! O, tragic; And not may we pray?

The organ, as organs will, swooshes up in a chord and burst into that staple, "Just as I Am." And toward the front of the church, because revealed upon to give such "witnes-

me the inevitable parade of hobers and tame villatic fowl: weeping rls, the semicancroid, Malchians ith severed ears, cured demoniacs, e now-thankfully-upright hemoroidal, the luckless, with bad drafts fishes, and the entrussed, en-utched, and enfeebled, all tapping, rking, and lurching altward in e owl light like the Beggars Come Town.

Dr. Cloogy greeted each soul with congratulatory handshake and then med each on a beeline into a back om behind the ellipse, where they ould be given, in the name of vic-icum, whole fistfuls of leaflets, cat-egues, and brochures. The material ll have pictures of lions snuggling o lambs, an idealized couple-in-ofile looking up into a nebula, a gin in a 4-H Club T-shirt, nuzzling bunny. The articles, tricked out in e kind of prose usually reserved r trying to induce a three-year-old eat his farina, are written either muscular Christian wafflebats med Rev. Bob, Billy Wayne Bur-1, or Dr. Carlton C. Carter, or second-rate "personalities" who t dismal records, sell orange juice, d wear white bucks in real life.

The evangelist, by the way, is per-ps best studied through his pam-lets. What he likes, simply, is money and power. His hates are ich the more quaint of the two. e list might include: two-tone oes, polysyllabic words, ecologists, t cross buns, educated blacks, un-cated blacks, the word "whom," n liquor, fun, actors, enemies of : NRA, drainpipe pants, Catholics, g Northern cities, wayside shrines, urvard, muffin spoons, Bolsheviks, ards, and pomeranians.

The recessionary at the Wyanoïd ptiist Church went off without a ch: the last hysterical hymn was ag so loud it turned the floor un-er your feet to sponge. Dust settled, d bonking out of the pews the lit-folks put on their sparrow-bill os and departed. Dr. Cloogy de-ndep to someone's house for a ee-hour dinner. And a few final agglers from the congregation re last seen bewilderedly walking a dirt road into the middle dis-ice, one or two of them pausing

only to sigh and lean against a tree, the better to pry a piece of gumwad from the bottom of their old, old shoes. And God? *Abiit, excessit, evasiit, erupit.*

AT LEAST your religious experiences are over for the day. Be thankful. Fatigued, you return to your room to sleep out the day. Night falls. Stirring up after midnight again, however, and looking about you, you're cleverly ill disposed to make the same mistake twice: there will be no television with its clerical creep-mouse cheeping at you from his little hole, there will be no radio with its lit-bum-biter from Wheeling, W. Va., offering for your religious edification real apostolic lunch pails or, say, one of the actual pinions wrested from an angel in the land of Penueel.

But, idle, you get bored. Bored, you get restless. Restless, you slide open a drawer, and, rising on one elbow, lift out in the shape of a book —O, don't! O, too late!—that inter-denominational Disneyland of cheer-

ings-up, pep-tonics, across-the-fence chat, and general *protreptikos*: the Gideon Bible. Mercy! O mercy, mercy me!

Your eyes wobble over the first page. Unsteadfast? Turn to Daniel 6:26. Considering a tattoo? Turn to Leviticus 19:28. Gluttonous for partridge? Turn to 1 Samuel 26:20. Itching, seborrhea, psoriasis? Turn to 1 Corinthians 11:14. Bloody flux? Turn to Esther 2. Wounded by a harrow? Turn to Chronicles 20:3. And so it went. Urolagnic? Horny? Devilish? Nagged? Compulsively negotiating a sex change? Every distemper had its wretched simple. One had only to ask, to seek, to knock, when—zip! zip! zip!—he would receive, find, and have it opened unto him. It was all there, that is, until you snapped off the light and fell back onto the hard pillow, thinking *but what receive, what find, have what opened unto me?*

Then you remember the evangelist, who knows these answers. And slowly, now, you have the feeling you do too. □

HARPER'S/JANUARY 1982

Solution to the December Puzzle Notes for "Battleships"

AN F-alter(anagram); AO cou(ghs)-gar; AP junk-ets(anagram); AS opah, hidden; AU gob-I; AV N-ought; BQ troll-op; BT Fr-eight; BW oar, homonym; CM ro(wer d)ue; CQ quiet, anagram; CT rab(reversal)-ble(w); CW tr(awling)n(et); CX quandaries, anagram; DM alga, hidden; DP learn, hidden; DT th(e)-rift-y; DV half, hidden; EM stra(reversal)-What; EN role-O; EP wear, homonym; ES t(L)ume; EV vaunted, anagram; FT horns-woggles, anagram; FV lo(t)ion; GN vo(tar)y(age); GT brig-and-age; GU fresh, two meanings; GW flotillas, anagram; HO arson, anagram; HP tramps, two meanings; HR northwester-N; HU (b)ooze; HV not(reversal)-ER; HS spr(a)y; IN jerk, two meanings; IQ pu(reversal)-ree(f); IR (t)roust; IS yaw-N; IW doily, oil inside d(or)y; JN eli, reversal; JO De(sir)e; JT (Karam)azov; JW elver, anagram; KM J(auntie)r; KO lose(anagram)-R; KU Gene(Sis); KX quahog, ho(me) inside quag; LP MO-is-t(ilted); LT in-tens(anagram)-(w)hal(e); LV jaw-breakers.

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PUZZLE

EIGHT TO THE BAR

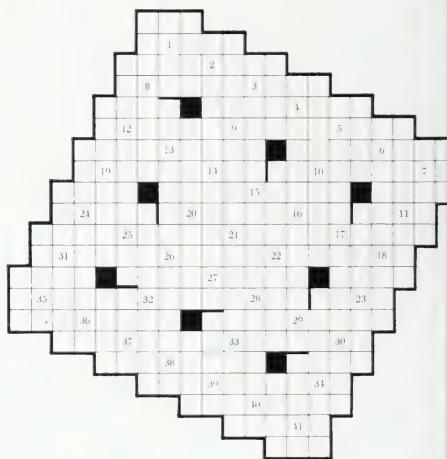
by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

This month's instructions:

The answers to all clues are eight letters long, and are to be entered in the eight squares in the diagram surrounding their respective numbers. The solver must determine where each starts, and in which direction it "circles" its number. Eight entries in the diagram, all related, are not clued. They go around the eight black squares. A bar is provided for each to indicate the unclued entry's starting point, but its direction is to be determined. The four outermost letters on each corner may be rearranged to CHEER SOLO HE TRIED.

Clue answers include two proper nouns, 19 is an uncommon word, and 37 a variant spelling. Considering the title, the clues have been given a musical flavor, but are otherwise normal. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 77.



CLUES

1. In D, the solo can provide vital though minimal supports
2. A chorist doesn't make beans? On the contrary!
3. To spoil, for instance, melody upset union
4. Unfinished idea in *La Mer* is turned around, giving relief
5. Sport is present before big dance
6. Notes for idiots
7. Hymns found in church, or a lesson
8. Rag with a Latin, unemotional kind of humor
9. Piano makes noise (chatters)
10. Chopin's Impromptu: *The French Game*
11. Layers that boost the brass?
12. Improvised accompaniment angers those who want blood
13. An introduction from Mussorgsky? It's indecent
14. Confines half of melody in British vehicles
15. Shore is out of tune as Tosca—write in an E
16. Female saint, 5, has number in Beethoven's third symphony
17. Conductor, on tour, is an old woman, full of coldness
18. Like Dvorak's dances, arranged in vocals
19. Old dance music assumes a little resistance—it cuts off mine
20. They sing two articles in sobs
21. Departures from dominant theory in series he composed again

22. Causes distortion through Victrola at first—rest is disturbed
23. Means to study music
24. I'm all steamed up for making music public—all I operate shows it!
25. Musical instruments company turned over operatic songs about the end of autumn
26. Look over the Met's balcony—it's comparatively meagre
27. Some former British royalty remaining in *Die Meistersinger*
28. Black cats criticize the extreme characters of Richard Strauss
29. Barcarole, right out, is rewritten for fish
30. Caruso's distressed about Bizet's introduction being full of scales
31. Band leader assigned parts and went to the polls
32. I'm more snobbish . . . or is note off key
33. Brahms's First: more suitable, more lively
34. Pretended the Stones' music is a symbol of the Irish
35. Beat out most of *The Lady in Red*
36. Half a Hebrew song taken by string instruments, resulting in slight deformities
37. Snarled slow Noël in winter clothing
38. Defenses for passé opera in English
39. Awkward boy tries rare situation for *Falstaff*
40. Wise bard rendered off-color recitals
41. The Platters gossip where? That's what I heard

CONTEST RULES

Send complete diagram with name and address to Eight To The Bar, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by January 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive a one-year subscription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the February issue. Winners' names will be printed in the March issue. Winner of the November puzzle, "Masterpiece," are Monte Aronsohn, Brooklyn, New York; C. Laskowski, Libertyville, Illinois; and Phil Potter, West Union, Iowa.

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THE CASE OF · THE · 'AON BRAICH'



W&S



one rainy evening, a man with
elic on his breath delivered to my
or a case of Glenfiddich. "Aon
tich," he murmured. No one here
that name, I mused. When I
ked up, he had disappeared.



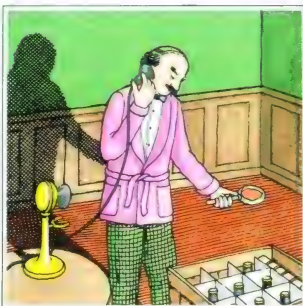
Upon cracking the cache of
Glenfiddich with my Scottish Rites
hatchet, I found each bottle of this
distinctive malt whisky to be of
triangular shape. Evidently, there
were more sides to this story still.



Examining the label, I detected a
most intriguing clue: Glenfiddich is
Gaelic for 'Valley of the Deer.' Had
this peculiar charade been nothing
more than a cleverly staged stag
party invitation?



sudden revelation struck me like
elt from Savile Row. Perhaps the
t-stained pages of MacTurf's
tch On The Lochs' would hold
explanation. I reached for my
ame — but the book was gone!



It was then my friend MacIntosh
rang. "Aon Braich!" he intoned.
That strange name again! "I'd have
returned the book myself, but with
this downpour..." Then I saw my
MacTurf tucked 'midst the malts.



A newly-marked page revealed that
it was the Glenfiddich that was
'aon braich,' or single malt. One sip
confirmed its singular character.
Rarely had a case led me to such a
splendid solution.

GLENFIDDICH



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Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

Campus and the Corporation

There are growing grounds for concern about the health and vitality of higher education in America. Public and private universities face troubled futures rooted in fiscal uncertainties that strike at the heart of the educational mission.

Budgets and endowments are being ravaged by inflation. Faculty salary scales are under pressure; pay dropped by 20% in constant dollars during the last decade. Enrollments are on the decline, particularly in graduate studies. Bright young people are turning away from academic careers. With their budgets squeezed, universities are deferring needed maintenance. They are stinting on books for their libraries and instruments for their labs.

All this threatens the continued quality of on-campus teaching, scholarship, inquiry, innovation, and research: functions vital to the underpinnings of knowledge in our democratic society.

Take basic research, or the search for knowledge that enables us to do more things in better ways. At least 60% of all the basic research in the U.S. is done by universities. On-campus research and development in 1979 exceeded \$5 billion in value, and more than \$3.5 billion of the total represented basic research, as distinct from applied research and engineering development.

The U.S. government has been the principal sponsor of basic research at universities. However, government support has been weakening in recent years. One measure of hope is the increasing involvement of the business community in supporting university research and in contributing in other ways to the strengthening

ing of higher education.

Still, there's large room for growth in corporate help for education. "Business has gained a clearer understanding of the role of the universities and the value of free inquiry," notes the Committee for Corporate Support of Private Universities. "One result is a substantial increase in business support of higher education — measured in inflated dollars. But in constant dollars, it has risen only marginally." What's especially disturbing is that many corporations give little or nothing to higher education.

Inducing more companies to support higher education is the task taken on by the Boston-based committee. It is not a fund-raising agency. Rather, it is an advocate, an exhorter, working to foster closer relationships between campus and the corporation.

Corporations turn to the campus for the talented, trained people they need. They draw on the ideas and innovations that flow from university scholarship and research. So business has a direct self-interest in getting closer to the higher education community, finding out what the needs are, and helping to fill them. There are many ways to help: direct research grants, capital contributions, matching employees' gifts to universities, fellowships for young teacher-scholars, cooperative projects in teaching and research.

Increasing ties of understanding and support are being formed between business and education. Such links are mutually valuable. They serve both institutions, along with the broad public interest. They should be multiplied and strengthened.



**UNITED
TECHNOLOGIES**

Harper's

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4 LETTERS

William J. Quirk 8 THE FECKLESS THRIFTS

The savings and loans can't make money exploiting their customers anymore, so now they're exploiting the taxpayers too.

**Nicholas Lemann 14 THE FOURTH ESTATE
SEARCHING FOR THE SUNBELT**

The career of a news peg.

Wilfrid Sheed 21 CLARE BOOTHE LUCE

What a woman had to do to make it in the American Century.

George Feifer 39 RUSSIAN WINTER

How cold is it?
It's so cold...

Kathleen Spivack 49 THE MOMENTS-OF-PAST-HAPPINESS QUILT
A poem.

Nicholas von Hoffman 50 THE BRAHMS LULLABY
A story.

John Morressy 60 THE OXFORD BOOK OF NEGLIGIBLE LITERARY ANECDOTES
A selection.

BOOKS

Hugh Kenner 62 FROM LOWER BELLOWVIA

It's a long, long way from *Augie March* to *The Dean's December*.

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The author's reply as a literary genre.

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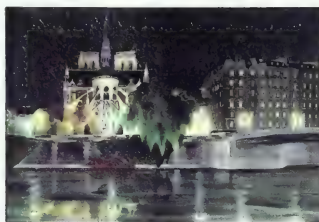
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LETTERS

Union by consent

There are fundamental flaws in
Conor Cruise O'Brien's Letter from
Abroad ["The Four Horsemen,"
Harper's, December 1981], in which
he criticizes the four of us for sup-
porting a united Ireland as the key
to peace and an end to the violence
in Northern Ireland.

First, we reject Dr. O'Brien's as-
sertion that the Ireland we want to
help does not exist. It is there, bleed-
ing from too many wounds inflicted
too deeply over the past dozen years
in Northern Ireland and tolerated too
lightly by advocates of the status
quo. Our view of contemporary
Ireland is very different from Dr.
O'Brien's, but it is nearer to reality.

Second, Dr. O'Brien ignores the
central fact that the unity we favor
is an Ireland united on the basis of
reconciliation between the Irish Prot-
estant tradition and the Irish Cath-
olic tradition—a unity achieved by
the *consent*, freely given, of a major-
ity of all the people of Northern
Ireland. We unequivocally reject any
suggestion that the North can be
bombed into unity with the South,
or that the Ulster majority can be
coerced in other ways into union
with the Republic of Ireland. As Dr.
O'Brien notes, political leaders in
Britain have increasingly embraced
this constructive position of Irish
unity by consent, and we regret his
effort to hold back this gathering
tide of history.

Third, Dr. O'Brien errs in assert-
ing that we ignore the legitimate
aims and aspirations of Ulster Prot-
estants. Time and again, in state-
ments going back over several years,
we have emphasized that any settle-
ment of the conflict in Northern Ire-
land must safeguard the basic in-
terests and identity of both parts of
the community, Protestant as well

as Catholic. The Irish Protestant
tradition can be fully protected in a
united Ireland. Unity is neither im-
possible nor desirable without such pro-
tection, and that is why we welcome
forthright proposals for consti-
tutional change in the Republic to
provide these essential guarantees.
The situation with respect to a united
Ireland is not without precedent in
similar guarantees of individual lib-
erty and religious freedom written
into our Constitution and the
Bill of Rights and were indispensable
to the birth of the United States.

Finally, we reject Dr. O'Brien's
apocalyptic view that the road to
Irish unity is the road to civil war.
His letter dismisses in half a minute
the terrorism, murders, and
bombings that are devastating North-
ern Ireland today. We condemn this
violence, and we are doing all we
can to urge Americans to avoid
actions that contribute to it. Dr.
O'Brien's preoccupation with the
specter of a bloodbath in the future
is not a valid reason to ignore the
reality of the bloodshed occurring
now.

There are signs of hope in the
current Anglo-Irish summits. We
challenge for international diplomacy
and for leaders of goodwill on both
sides is to construct a settlement
with the agreement of the parties
which can end the violence and
secure a lasting peace.

We firmly believe that some form
of Irish unity is the answer. Support
for the status quo, which Dr. O'Brien
seems to favor, is not a solution, nor
a counsel of despair. It is the status
quo of recurrent hunger strikes, re-
lentless appeals to religious hatred,
random sectarian murders, bombings
of public facilities, assassinations of
elected representatives, hailstorms of
plastic bullets, and continuing al-
ienation in relations among Britain,
Ireland, and the United States. If this

ounds are permitted to fester, they ill only lead to more and worse estruction.

THOMAS P. O'NEILL, JR.
Speaker, House of Representatives
EDWARD M. KENNEDY
U.S. Senate
DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN
U.S. Senate
HUGH L. CAREY
Governor, State of New York

In Northern Ireland the British overnment needs to slice off those ontiguous areas where the majority of the inhabitants are Catholic and ish to join the Republic of Ireland.

The remaining loyalist area would en be even more solidly Protestant an now. Its self-government can ad should be restored.

There would still be problems with olated Catholic-majority enclaves, specially in urban Belfast. Possibly ese areas could be allowed to fly e Irish flag and run their own af-fairs while still remaining econo-mally linked to Britain. It would be o more anomalous than the West erlin situation.

Mr. O'Brien should be congratu-ated for his constructive views on e problem. As far as Americans are oncerned, the most useful thing we ould do would be to substantially ernalize the immigration laws so as o allow easy immigration here from eland to resume.

GLENN T. WILSON
Edwardsville, Ill.

While Conor Cruise O'Brien osten-bly is speaking to four American oliticians, he presumably expects ome of the rest of us Irish-Ameri-ans to listen to him as well. The time as now passed when the O'Brien osition is a viable one. Sides have een irrevocably drawn.

O'Brien is outspokenly on the side f the British staying in Northern eland. Most Irish-Americans, I be-ieve, now want them to leave, al-most regardless of the consequences. Whether this is a sensible or even a ourageous view (after all, we are a fe three thousand miles away) is o longer the point.

The Ulster Protestants have a pe-uliar history, as O'Brien so patron-



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izingly informs us. So do Irish-Americans. Neither the expanse of the seas nor the span of time have cut our attachment to the motherland. In my case, my father's grandparents came here after the Famine, and my mother's mother from Ulster in the 1870s. The events of the past twelve years and especially those of 1981 have reralidicalized many of us to an amazing degree. John Hume and the SDLP are discredited forces.

O'Brien's message, however, is a substantial warning. Although it might be overdrawn, we should prepare for its coming. The question is no longer if the British will leave, but when they will leave.

HUGH SHORT
Chittenden, Vt.

Post pony express

William Rodgers's "Return to Sender" [*Harper's*, December 1981] presented a useful picture of the development and operation of the postal service in today's political and economic climate. Many would agree with his assessment that in its current incarnation the Post Office is a money-hungry and bumbling being. What he has done, however, is unfairly pull out one thread for disparagement, when I suspect it is the entire tangle of modern American life that he views with disfavor.

He begins with the often heard dirge mourning the passing of cheap rates. But when you consider inflation and the drastic reduction of taxpayer subsidies, the postal service is still offering a communications bargain. In 1940, a three-cent letter traveled in a \$700 truck that used gasoline at nineteen cents a gallon. In 1960, a ten-cent letter traveled in a \$3,500 truck that used gasoline at thirty-nine cents a gallon. In 1980, a fifteen-cent letter traveled in a \$6,900 truck that used gasoline at \$1.20 a gallon, and then in a \$10 million airplane flown by a pilot whose salary was \$55,000 a year. It still costs less to mail a first-class letter in the United States than in any other comparable industrialized nation except Canada, where the government subsidy, courtesy of the tax-

payers, is a far larger share of the postal budget.

Rodgers also chants standard litany No. 2, that the postal service does poorly in delivering the mail. Phoenix-Hecht Inc., a Chicago-based cash-management consulting firm, has been running mail checks of the U.S. Postal Service in one hundred cities three times a year since 1970, the year of the Postal Reorganization Act, when, according to Rodgers, the weasel was given the run of the henhouse. The company found that over the past decade, with the exception of New York City, mail delivery has improved by as much as a full day. They concluded that, all things considered, the postal service is doing an excellent job with first-class mail, and is a model of efficiency for other government organizations. To be sure, with thousands of fallible people handling billions of pieces of mail each year, some will be mishandled, and it is only human nature to remember the rare exceptions when correspondence is late in arriving and to forget the hundreds, the thousands, of on-time deliveries.

The third and overriding lament in Mr. Rodgers's article is that the postal service is being transformed into "a merged partner, if not the handmaiden, of big business... a captive subsidiary of the industrial-mercantile system." He gives us the impression that somehow, as the tides of junk mail wash over us, true personal correspondence via letters and limited-circulation journals is being drowned. Yet he admits that the postal service needs this third-class business to keep running, so that a person in one small town can maintain a correspondence with a friend in another small town hundreds of miles away. I think the real issue is not discounted third-class mail, but the current economic structure of life in America. If people did not respond to third-class mailings, if all of it was tossed in the trash as soon as it arrived, such mailings would soon cease, no matter what the postage discount.

EDWARD J. ZARITT
Letter Carrier
Shrewsbury, Mass.

In regard to William Rodgers's article about the Post Office, it should be pointed out that inflation is not among the problems of this institution. Consider that in 1925 a letter could be sent between two major American cities at a cost of two cents and a delivery time of two days. Today the same service costs twenty cents and requires three weeks. Still only a penny a day.

DENNIS W. GORDON
Madison, Wis.

A dubious victory

William Tucker's piece ["The Energy Crisis Is Over," *Harper's*, November 1981] is probably right in saying that our oil and gas prices needed to be allowed to reach world market levels once the U.S. had put itself at OPEC's mercy. However, so much of the accompanying analysis is wrong that the article misleads much more than it enlightens.

The article states that "the beginning of the oil crisis of the 1970s can be traced to 1968 and the first stirrings of the environmental movement." It then goes on to fault the environmental movement and consumer groups for undermining the oil import quota system that had restricted foreign imports from 1950 onward.

Environmentalists and consumers had almost nothing to do with the deterioration of oil import control, which was well under way by 1968. The import ceilings were circumvented by decisions to permit industrial oil to come in without restriction to the eastern United States after 1965, and by large special benefits given to several refineries located in the Caribbean.

More important, however, is the fact that the oil import quota system, which Mr. Tucker praises, was in fact an utter failure that cost U.S. consumers some \$30 billion over its lifetime, while failing to provide the very protection from eventual foreign disruption that was said to justify it. President Nixon's refusal to scrap the program in the face of urgent recommendations of his own Cabinet task force stemmed not from

ourage" but from the political im-
itives made clear in Attorney
Mitchell's admonition to the
k force to remember where the
ministration's friends were, and
ause George Bush was permitted
announce the president's rejection
the recommendation in the clos-
days of his unsuccessful 1970
npaign for a Texas seat in the
S. Senate.

The article also continually con-
es the concept of paying a mar-
price with the concept of paying
substantial subsidy to U.S. prop-
ers. What Mr. Tucker is really
uing for is the latter, though he
en calls it the former. The OPEC
ce has had little to do with a
arket," which might price oil be-
today's levels and would certain-
have done so in the mid-1970s.
Tucker himself notes that there
no indication that OPEC prices
ire hit bottom." Furthermore, his
husiasm for the world market ob-
usly does not extend to the 1960s,
en U.S. reliance on the world mar-
price would have cut the domes-
price in half.

In defiance of his own graphs, Mr.
cker ascribes our victory over
EC very largely to President Rea-
i's January 28, 1981, decision to
elerate the end of oil price con-
ls by a few months. The fact is
t the "crucial decision" was not
and but President Carter's in-
ion of this process in 1979. U.S.
nand has been falling steadily
ce that time, and Reagan did no
re than transfer a bonus to oil
ducers in the name of encourag-
events that were inevitable any-
y. Furthermore, the energy con-
vation of 1981 comes not from a
idental decision and a price in-
ase of a few pennies this spring,
from investments in smaller cars,
ergy-efficient machinery, wood
ves, insulation, solar energy, and
il and nuclear power over the
70s. Except for the latter, Mr. Rea-
i seems determined to eliminate
incentives that led to these in-
stments. In any case, his contribu-
ion won't be clear for several years

Mr. Tucker describes the effects
the increase in U.S. oil prices as

"a relatively mild pill" and suggests
that it could all have been done
much sooner. This suggests consid-
erable insensitivity to the windfall-
profit question, to the hardships pro-
duced for lower-income consumers of
gasoline and heating oil throughout
the northern United States, and to
the considerable contribution that in-
creased oil prices have made to in-
flation.

Mr. Tucker may not have been
responsible for subtitled the article
"How we beat OPEC." In ten years,
OPEC has increased its prices more
than twentyfold (eightfold in real
terms), despite its unsettling last few
months. If we enjoy a similar victory
in the Eighties, we'll be wearing
barrels as we read Mr. Tucker's
1991 celebration of the resolve of
our chief executives.

There is a fifty-year pattern to
U.S. energy pricing, in which the
government, in the name of protect-
ing us from supply shortage and
high prices, actually follows policies
designed to prevent the reverse.
The oil import quota system is one
of the leading examples. No one
could deny that price controls can,
in many circumstances, make mat-
ters worse, but those circumstances
do not include the situation in which
the so-called market price is actually
the level set by a cartel. Mr. Tucker's
pronouncement that "the oil crisis
was nothing more than a self-inflicted
wound" is true in ways that he does
not discuss and that began decades
before the 1968 beginnings of his
history. The process did not start
with environmentalists in 1968, and
it will not end if we describe the
present situation as victory.

PETER A. BRADFORD
Commissioner
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C.

WILLIAM TUCKER REPLIES:

The problem with Mr. Bradford's
letter seems related to his inability
to pronounce the word "profit"—ex-
cept perhaps when preceded by the
word "windfall." I kept anticipating
it in the text, and instead found
words like "bonus" and "subsidy."
The implication seems to be that no-
body ever makes money, but is sim-

ply rewarded by the government.
This attitude, in fact, was at the
heart of the energy "crisis."

In any seller's market, somebody
will always make money. If the Rus-
sian wheat crop fails, American
farmers are going to do well. But
at least people are still going to be
fed. Only when the government in-
tervenes and tries to prevent anyone
from making a profit do "dearth's"
turn into "famines," as Adam Smith
put it. (I apologize for the mistake
on the graph that made it seem as if
President Reagan's decontrol came
at the end of 1981 instead of the be-
ginning, and thus missed representing
the accelerated drop in imports that
resulted.)

Surprisingly, Mr. Bradford was
one of the few readers who refused
to see this point, and argued the
matter in such partisan and political
terms. In light of this, I find it slight-
ly alarming that he is head of the
Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Per-
haps the energy crisis isn't over,
after all.

Déjà vu

In "The Art of Moving Pictures"
[*Harper's*, October 1981], Bruno
Bettelheim quotes without permis-
sion, and paraphrases without attri-
bution, from my forthcoming book
*Familiar Mysteries: The Truth in
Myth* (Oxford University Press, Jan-
uary 1982).

The quotation on page 82 of
Harper's that Dr. Bettelheim attrib-
utes to R. W. B. Lewis is actually
from the introduction to my book.
Apparently my footnote reference to
Lewis's *The American Adam* led Dr.
Bettelheim to suppose I was quoting
Lewis. Other parts of the article echo
passages from my introduction and
second chapter.

The publisher sent Dr. Bettelheim
the galley of my book for review.
Although I am pleased that he found
my ideas interesting, I do not want
the book's readers to think that I
plagiarized from either Lewis or
Bettelheim.

SHIRLEY P. LOWRY
Pacific Palisades, Calif.

HARPER'S/FEBRUARY 1982

THE FECKLESS THRIFTS

Why the savings and loan industry is dying—and deserves to die

by William J. Quirk

IF PEOPLE were stupid, savings and loan institutions would have a nice racket going these days, borrowing money from small savers at 5½ percent and loaning it back to them as mortgages at 16 or 17 percent. Many people used to be almost this stupid, and savings and loans used to be profitable. But the financial jolts of the past decade have awakened savers and borrowers, while S & Ls have slept on. Founded as a benevolent financial aid to ordinary working folks, the "thrift" industry, as it is called, has survived for years by exploiting the naiveté of its customers and by enjoying special protections from the government. But sophistication and deregulation have finally caught up with the S & Ls. The industry is bust. Now it is the latest petitioner for a government bail-out. Politicians, as usual more attuned to the cries of individual capitalists than to the dynamics of capitalism, are preparing to waste billions salvaging these corroded old hulks. Far better to let them sink.

The names of the thrift institutions conjure up an earlier and more frugal America: the Union Dime Savings Bank, the Emigrant Savings Bank. Many have a nautical theme: the Seamen's Bank for Savings, the Dry Dock Savings Bank, the Anchor Savings Bank. The names evoke clipper ships, lamplighters, Christmas caroling, hardworking seamen and mechanics, and solid moral values like thrift.

The thrifts still market their prod-

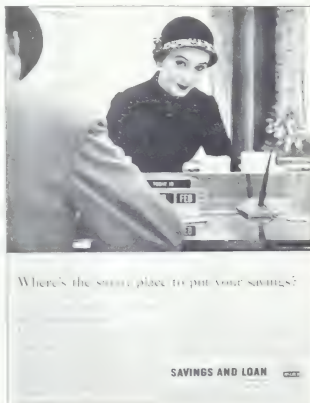
William J. Quirk is a lawyer who writes on financial matters. He lives in New York.

uct as if they were dealing with sailors just back from around the Horn. At a time when money-market funds are paying 18 percent, they offer 5½ percent, plus a free toaster, a blanket, or a horse with a clock in its stomach. The only thing that ever gave you a fair deal and a prize was Cracker Jack. They advertise Christmas Club accounts with the bold promise of "the highest rate allowed by law"—which is, of course, that same 5½ percent. The law referred to here is one much treasured by the S & Ls, despite the posture of reluctant compliance implied in their ads. It sets a ceiling on the rates they pay, thus eliminating any costly competition for customers while guaranteeing them a small advantage over a similar ceiling on interest at commercial banks. The S & Ls, founded to help the poor and unso-

phisticated, end their days in the unconscionable exploitation of the sav- people. By law, the passbooks are to be deregulated by 1986, but the present withdrawal rates, the passbook savers will be gone before then. The pigeons will have flown.

THE difference between commercial banks and S & Ls is that commercial banks lend from a variety of sources and lend for a variety of purposes. S & Ls traditionally bring in money with passbook savings accounts and lend it out for home mortgages. The S & Ls have \$658 billion in assets—more than the life-insurance companies (\$496 billion), and more than all public and private pension funds combined (\$575 billion). America's financial institutions, other than the commercial banks, loom large with assets of \$1.6 trillion. The money-market funds, despised by the banks and S & Ls for their unsavory habit of paying serious interest to all but the smallest savers, have soared up from \$10 billion worth of assets in January 1979 to \$180 billion in January 1982. This is less than a quarter the assets of the S & Ls, which shows that most people haven't woken up.

The S & Ls' quiet little corner of the financial sector has been swamped in the great tide of high interest rates. The thrifts lost nearly \$5 billion last year, which is bad enough. But the real crisis is that they are sitting on over \$200 billion of what the accountants call "unrealized



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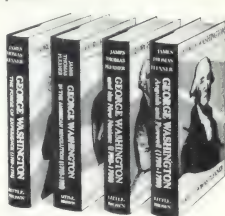
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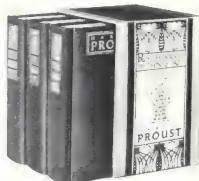
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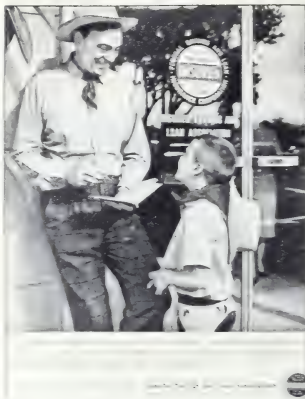
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THE FECKLESS THRIFTS

losses. Ordinary Americans who have invested in stocks and bonds over the last several years know all about unrealized losses. If you buy a security for \$100 and it goes down to \$60, you are \$40 poorer, even if you don't sell it at that price. The S & Ls have invested in mortgages. An 8 percent mortgage made five years ago might be carried on the books at \$50,000, if that is how much the homeowner still owes. But the right to receive principal and interest payments at 8 percent over the next twenty-five years is not worth \$50,000 when long-term interest rates have zoomed to 18 percent. The S & Ls have loaned out \$523 billion, which, because of the great tide, is not worth more than \$315 billion. The losses are a shapeless monster struggling to get out. The S & Ls do not have the resources to keep these losses suppressed.

Currently, the S & Ls are paying more, on average, for their deposits than they are earning on their loans. They are paying 11.31 percent and earning 9.79 percent. This is like buying apples at twelve cents and selling them for ten cents, a practice with a limited future. And even this unhealthy spread depends on the willingness of many savers to leave their money at 5 or 6 percent, which cannot last. The S & Ls are stuck with those low-interest mortgages, but depositors are not stuck with the S & Ls. In the first nine months of 1981, withdrawals from S & Ls were \$35 billion more than deposits. In June and July alone, net withdrawals were \$12 billion. The thrifts, unable to pay their depositors, borrowed over \$25 billion from the federal government, bringing their total indebtedness to over \$6 billion. The money is supposed to be a loan.

The trouble is that the S & Ls have funded long-term fixed-interest liabilities (mortgages) with short-term liabilities (deposits), which could stay forever or could leave tomorrow. (The commercial banks, by contrast, mostly loan short.) A typical transaction in the good old days was a thirty-year, 7 percent mortgage funded with money from passbook savings accounts paying 5 percent. The bank's 2 percent spread was



quite enough to take care of management perks and provide a reasonable net worth. The system worked because long-term rates were always higher than short-term. The simple theory for this was that money was at less risk if it was to be paid back sooner rather than later. It was a good theory, but it turned out not to be an immutable law. The S & Ls complacently assumed that interest rates in general would never move beyond their two-point spread. As long as rates were relatively stable, the outstanding mortgages retained their value. If an S & L had any need for cash, it could sell old mortgages for 100 cents on the dollar.

Cracks in this structure showed as early as the mid-60s. In the last half of the 1970s, two things went seriously wrong. First, interest rates became volatile, and in 1979-81, took off for the sky. This destroyed the value of the outstanding mortgages, with their low yields. They could be sold, on the average, for only sixty cents on the dollar. Meanwhile, the backbone of the S & Ls, the passbook saver, began fleeing for better deals. Passbook savings made up 91 percent of all deposits in 1966; 59 percent in 1970; 43 percent in 1975; and 21 percent in 1980.

When these passbook savers started asking for their money back, the S & Ls were in a fix. The money had been invested in mortgages, which could only be sold at an enormous loss. The only way to replace

the lost depositors with new ones was to offer higher rates, but the low-rate suckers were needed to balance out the low-rate mortgages they were stuck with. The S & Ls' solution, in 1978, was to begin offering money-market rates—not to passbook savers who were stuck with the old 5 1/2 percent, but to those who could invest at least \$10,000 for a minimum of six months. These new certificates attracted enough money to pay off departing depositors, but at a sharply increased cost. Current market-rate certificates make up 65 to 70 percent of total deposits. In late 1979 the S & Ls paid over 12 percent on new money-market certificates while they earned an average of 9 percent on their mortgage portfolios. This was the beginning of the "negative spread."

The second thing that went wrong in the late 1970s was that short-term interest rates went higher than long-term rates, creating what the experts call an "inverted yield curve." This was as bad as it sounds, because it meant that the S & Ls could earn less even on their new mortgages than they had to pay for new deposits. In December 1979 the S & Ls were making mortgages at an average rate of 11.30 percent while paying 12.41 percent on their six-month certificates; in December 1980 the average new mortgage rate was 12.8 percent while a six-month certificate cost the S & L 15.81 percent. This was blatant speculation, in the hope

at the inverted yield curve would do itself. That is, the S & Ls hoped at short-term rates would drop, while the mortgages sold at high long-term rates would be locked in, producing a spectacular positive spread. When, in late 1980, the S & Ls finally realized that gambling was not for them, they essentially went out of the business of making loans. They priced their product so high (18 percent) that no one who needed one could qualify for it. Mortgage lending was down 50 percent in the twelve months ending September 1981. In many cases, the excess cash was put into money-market funds.

So America's savings and loan institutions are no longer attracting savings and no longer making loans. The history of the thrift institutions give me no hint that it would ever come this.

THE savings and loan system derives from two modest ideas that implanted themselves in American soil early in the last century. The first was borrowed from the English tradition of building societies, which began around 1775. In 1831, in Frankford, Pennsylvania, thirty-seven people organized the Oxford Provident Building Association. Each member paid 75 cents down for a share and received dollars a month thereafter. There were no depositors and the association paid no interest. When the association had enough money for a loan of \$500, a meeting was

called and the loan was auctioned off to the member paying the highest premium. The fellow most eager to build his home would bid the highest premium. The first winning premium was ten dollars, and the loan could only be used to build or buy a house approved by the association. (Even today, about 79 percent of S & L assets are in mortgages.) The process would continue until each member had a house loan. Since the association's only investments were loans to members, it wound up its affairs once every member had a house. The first Oxford Association lasted ten years.

The second root of today's thrift industry is exemplified by New York's first savings bank, which was chartered in 1819. The charter was granted on petition of the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism. Unlike a building society, a savings bank had depositors. It took such "small sums of money as may be saved from earnings of tradesmen, mechanics, laborers, minors, servants and others." The commercial banks, citadels of Hamiltonian aristocracy, would not let this crowd in the front door. The savings bank gathered up its small depositors and invested in government bonds. This afforded, wrote the draftsman, "the twofold advantage of security and interest." Government bonds were the only investment permitted, even though return on the bonds was low, to assure that the depositors' "small sums" would be conserved. The savings bank paid its depositors the interest it received on the bonds,

less management expenses. The bank was legally non-profitmaking. (Today, about 80 percent of the S & Ls are mutually owned, that is, they are officially owned by their depositors—though, like all such institutions, they take on a life of their own.)

The legislature granted the first savings-bank charter because, as the draftsman put it, they considered it "their duty to cherish all laudable attempts to ameliorate the condition of the poor and laboring class of the community." Consistent with this theme, the trustees and officers agreed to serve for no pay. The motive was not totally charitable. The trustees were businessmen who had found that even though they had no legal liability, they could not realistically avoid paying some employee welfare costs, particularly burial expenses. The savings bank was intended to encourage employees to self-insure against life's rude shocks.

The two streams, building societies and savings banks, flowed together into the thrift industry, of "savings and loans," across the country, and "savings banks," mostly in New York—both taking money from small depositors and lending it to home buyers. While commercial banking became more sophisticated, more national in scope, more complex, the thrifts remained content with this one simple, profitable, local transaction. Their folksy, benevolent image assured them favored status with the government, and with the public.

IN Frank Capra's 1947 movie *It's a Wonderful Life*, Jimmy Stewart plays an officer of a building and loan association in the Depression who spends most of his time preventing a greedy commercial banker (played by Lionel Barrymore in a wheelchair) from swallowing up his institution. At one point Stewart must beat off a panic by depositors. He tells the clamoring townspeople:

You're thinking of this place all wrong. As if I were keeping your money in a safe back here. Your money isn't here. It's in Joe's



THE FECKLESS THRIFTS

house ... right next to yours. And in Kennedy's house and the Macklins' ... and a hundred others. You lent them the money to build and they're paying you back as best they can. What do you want me to do? Foreclose on them?

The speech, together with \$2,000 of personal savings that Donna Reed slips to him, holds off the run.

As for that commercial banker, Stewart warns:

He's out to get us. Why? Because we're cutting into his business ... Nick, you lived in one of his houses. Have you forgotten it? Have you forgotten what you used to pay for that broken down shack ... If Potter gets hold of this Building and Loan there'll never be another decent house built in this town.

Potter's theory is that people should save their money until they can pay for a house in full. Jimmy Stewart disagrees.

Just remember, Mr. Potter, this rabble, as you call them, do most of the working, most of the paying, most of the living and most of the dying in this community. Is it too much for them to work and pay and live and die in a couple of clean rooms and a bath?

(Today, a leading New York savings bank, the Bowery, uses Joe DiMaggio as a spokesman to convince people that a savings passbook account, at 5½ percent, is the wisest and most patriotic investment they can make.)

By 1930, the S & Ls had acquired assets worth \$9 billion. The traditional mortgage, issued, say, in 1925, required the principal to be paid in one balloon payment due in five years unless the borrower renewed. At that point the S & Ls were pretty well matching their liabilities, short with short. The risk of rising interest was on the homeowner, since he would have to renew at the higher rate if he wanted to keep the mortgage. But as the Depression struck, the balloon mortgage led to massive foreclosures, and to the loss of buyers' homes when the five years were

up and they could neither pay nor qualify for renewal.

To take care of immediate problems, the government set up a bailout device called the Home Owners Loan Corporation, which bought up \$3 billion worth of sour mortgages. To get the building industry going again, the Roosevelt administration invented a new financial instrument: the long-term mortgage, featuring a low down payment and level monthly payments of combined principal and interest for twenty to thirty years. The new instrument was central to a new national policy of encouraging homeownership and decent housing. The suburbs began to grow, financed by the S & Ls. Owner-occupied housing has grown from 14 million units in 1930 to over 50 million.

The savings and loans, hard hit by the Depression, were now restructured: they were tax-exempt; they had federal government charters and federal guarantees for their depositors; they were guaranteed a low ceiling on the interest they paid but a competitive edge over the commercial banks. Finally, a very large item, the tax system permitted people to deduct interest payments, amounting to a direct federal subsidy of home mortgages, the S & Ls' only product.

Under the new rules, S & L assets grew from \$9 billion in 1930 to their current \$658 billion. The thrifts were protected from all possible contingencies short of nuclear war, except one: rising interest rates. The new long-term mortgage shifted the risk of rising interest from the borrower to the lender.

THE savings and loans have made their bed, but the Reagan administration does not propose to make them lie in it. The Reagan era began with a cold blast of free-market rhetoric, and as recently as last June, Treasury Secretary Donald Regan was saying, "The thrifts are losing money—so what?" This had certainly been Regan's attitude when, as head of Merrill Lynch, he pioneered the money-market-fund concept that deprived the S & Ls of their captive low-interest depositors.

But the powerful savings and loan lobby—with the help of local S & L officials scattered in every city and hamlet across the land—quickly convinced Congress and the White House that the only cure for half a century of protection and subsidy was more protection and subsidy.

The thrift industry's first triumph was the notoriously mislabeled "All Savers" certificate, included as part of last summer's tax bill. The "All Savers" is based on a simple, but grand, idea: if the S & Ls can borrow from "savers" at 12 percent (because the interest is tax-exempt) and reinvest at 17 percent (market rate) they will make a lot of money. For symmetry's sake, the commercial banks were also included. Not included were any savers below the 3 percent tax bracket, for whom the tax saving would not be worth the interest forgone (and who also lost a general \$100-a-year interest deduction, canceled in order to pay for the "All Savers"). Through fiscal year 1984, the Office of Tax Analysis estimates, the certificates will cost the government more than \$5 billion in forgone tax revenues.

The government-mandated ceiling on S & L passbook interest was supposed to rise from 5½ percent to 6 percent on November 1, 1981, a part of the general phasing out of federal interest controls. A month before, Regan had pushed for an even larger increase, in order to "strike a blow for the little guy." But the S & Ls successfully argued that they could not afford to give the depositors even the scheduled small increase. This at a time when inflation was running at about twice the prevailing interest ceiling, and when money-market funds were paying people with more sense almost three times as much. With friends like your friendly savings and loan, the sock under the mattress starts to look like a wise investment.

Americans probably believe that the little plague next to the teller means that their S & L deposits are insured by the federal government for up to \$100,000. Even New York Banking Superintendent Muriel Siebert said recently, "I've got the biggest bank in the world behind Gree

ch [a recent failure] or any other savings bank. I have the Federal Reserve..." In fact, federal liability is limited to the assets of various agencies set up to run the insurance program.

The savings and loan associations, with deposits of \$646 billion, are insured by the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation (FSLIC), which has assets worth \$6.6 billion, and authority to borrow another \$750 billion from the Treasury. The mutual savings banks and the commercial banks, with deposits of about \$.8 trillion, are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), which has assets of just over \$12 billion. The S & L insurance system was designed to deal with particular problem banks, not with the collapse of the industry. These agencies do not have enough money to pay off the depositors of more than a couple of failed institutions.

Another problem is that an actual liquidation, in which the S & Ls shut down and its depositors are paid off, would have what FDIC chairman William Isaac calls "a severe psychological impact." That is obviously an understatement. It is easy to imagine the effect of night-

TV interviews with worried depositors and persistent questioning of government officials: how many banks are in trouble? how much money do you have left? what happens when it runs out? Even Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed would not be able to stop a gigantic national panic on the S & Ls, nor, probably, on the commercial banks.

For these reasons, the preferred solution to the S & Ls' dilemma is to arrange mergers between unhealthy and healthy institutions, "assisted" or "supervised" by government agencies.

But a failed bank needs a good story to induce suitors. To induce the Metropolitan Savings Bank to take over the mortgages of the recently failed Greenwich Savings Bank, the FDIC guaranteed the surviving bank for five years against any loss because of the mortgages. This understanding is called—eat our heart out, welfare chiselers—

an "income maintenance agreement." For five years, the FDIC will pay the difference between what the old mortgages earn—7 percent, say—and the current market interest rate of, say, 14 percent. This is called the "interest rate spread indemnification."

Another newly created exotic flower is the "overhead cost indemnification," which covers all incidental costs of servicing the mortgages. In short, Metropolitan gets a free ride on the mortgages for five years, by which time they will be much closer to maturity, and interest rates may well have gone down. The final addition to the English language is called the "regulatory surplus certificate"—which means that the FDIC throws in \$100 million to Metropolitan's capital in return for a non-promise to pay it back, maybe, if things go well. The FDIC concedes that this \$100 million is a "probable loss."

The agency estimates the total cost to the taxpayers of arranging this one merger to be \$465 million.

This kind of exercise is extravagant and pointless. The god of day has gone down upon the S & Ls, in Mr. Micawber's phrase. The market's judgment has gone against them. At some price, the S & Ls could still be "saved" by a government hand-out. The Federal Reserve could print up \$50 or \$100 billion and loan it at below-market rates to the S & Ls for reinvestment at market rates.

But what policy imperatives would support such a massive bail-out? There is no need for an institution specializing in housing finance. That \$250 billion loss is going to fall somewhere, and a large chunk of it will certainly end up with the federal government. It might be both compassionate and psychologically prudent to guarantee the deposits beyond the assets of the federal insurance agencies. Beyond that, the market should be allowed to liquidate the S & Ls at the least possible cost. They lost their sense of mission some time ago. □

HARPER'S/FEBRUARY 1982

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SEARCHING FOR THE SUNBELT

Found, in an office at the University of Texas at Dallas

by Nicholas Lemann

YOU'RE the sixth reporter I've talked to this week," Bud Weinstein told me. In fact, that was the very first thing he told me, and it was particularly impressive because it was only Wednesday when we talked. He continued: "I'll tell you what kind of story to write." He got the sort of speculative glint in the eye that David O. Selznick must have had; my story was taking shape in his mind. "Call it 'Searching for the Sunbelt.' Say it's a lot of nonsense that it's an uninterrupted sea of prosperity."

Well, all right. The Sunbelt. Gleaming. Burgeoning. Nonunion. My search for the Sunbelt. What did it mean, I wondered—this complex and contradictory region, famed for its growth and prosperity, yet marred by the tawdry poverty that lies just beneath its gleaming surface? The time had come for me to venture forth and feel its pulse. I left the gleaming office tower in Austin where I work and drove to the airport, passing near booming nonunion semiconductor factories. I got on a booming, entrepreneurial Southwest Airlines plane and flew to Dallas, passing over gleaming defense plants that exist in stark contrast to the Bible Belt farmland that surrounds them. It's a lot of nonsense, I thought as my plane circled Dallas's gleaming skyline and burgeoning suburbs, that the Sunbelt is an uninterrupted sea of prosperity.

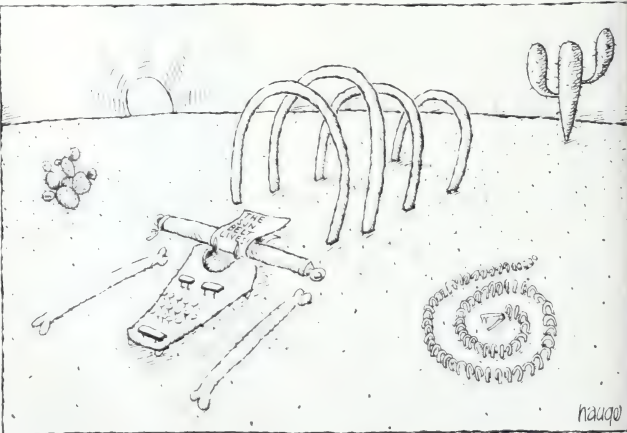
As soon as I got to Dallas I went to see Weinstein, whose full name is Bernard L. Weinstein and who is

professor of economics and political economy and associate director of the Center for Policy Studies at the University of Texas at Dallas. I was, after all, searching for the Sunbelt, and everyone who undertakes that mission ends up knocking on Weinstein's door. He is the world's greatest expert on the Sunbelt, and he, more than any other single person, shapes its destiny.

The reason he has so much power over the Sunbelt—this affable professor in a modest office in the Brasilia-like campus of a suburban university you've never heard of—is that the Sunbelt is not really a region. People in Los Angeles don't think of themselves as being in common cause with people in Waycross, Georgia. There's no shared culture. The economies are completely different. Politically, if the United

States is split in half, it's east versus west, not north versus south. The Sunbelt is really a concept, a category, and therefore its stewards are not politicians or businessmen but professors and journalists.

IF YOU are an ambitious journalist who wants to do more than cover fires and murders, or a worldly professor who doesn't want to spend his life in the library then you will surely be visited by the temptation to categorize. By creating a category, you are at once appealing to be insightful and increasing your role in the world. Let me categorize. There are two kinds of categories: those that flow upward to the press and professoriat, and those that flow downward from them. An example of the first kind of category is



Nicholas Lemann is executive editor of *Texas Monthly*.

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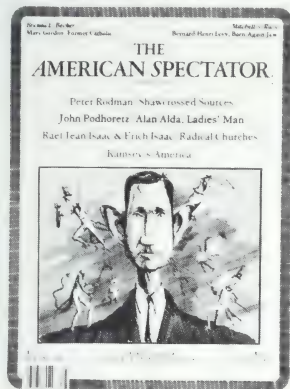
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New Wave of Jobless Migrants Reverses Old Path From South

The New York Times, June 3, 1981, page 1.

that of Communist Nations, which first declare themselves to be that and only then are discovered by the media. The American South is another example; it thought of itself as the South without needing the media to tell it so. The members of the second kind of category, on the other hand, first discover their kinship when they read about it in the paper. For example, did anyone realize spontaneously that he was living in the Fourth World, or, for that matter, in the New Hollywood, or Middle America, or the Sunbelt? Unlikely.

A successful category, once invented, takes on a life of its own. It becomes the subject of books and articles and three-day seminars. People stake their careers on it. Legislation is passed. Trends occur within the category ("The New Hollywood: The Kids Grow Up"; "The Fourth World Goes Third World"). The parsing of categories into trends can keep many people employed. If you take just a few basic categories (Hispanics, suburbs, the Sunbelt, poverty) and combine them imaginatively, you can fill up the front page of every Sunday paper in America (Sunday is trend day) from now until the year 2000, when the round of sixty-four-part series on the new millennium will begin. You could write about Hispanics in the suburbs, suburbs in the Sunbelt, the Sunbelt discovering poverty, poverty among Hispanics, and so on. Many great newspapers have already tackled all these themes.

SO FAR as I can determine, the Sunbelt was invented by Kevin P. Phillips, the Republican journalist, in his 1969 book *The Emerging Republican Majority*. "As of the present," he wrote, "another population shift—the huge

postwar white middle-class push to the Florida-California Sun country [elsewhere he called it, primitively, the Sun Belt]—... seems to be forging a new, conservative political era in the South, Southwest, and Heartland." Could Phillips have known what he was starting with those innocent words? At the time he wrote them, millions of people were living in the Sunbelt without one of them realizing it. They thought of themselves as Southerners or Texans or Los Angelenos; many of them, in fact, still think that. In this respect they are different from, say, Frenchmen, who would realize they were Frenchmen even if no one ever wrote an article about France. The Sunbelt had no premedia life.

By defining the Sunbelt as conservative, and therefore good, Phillips and other Republicans were laying down the gauntlet for journalists on the left, who immediately picked it up and began writing that the Sunbelt was conservative, and therefore bad. Even in the Sixties, the SDS theoretician Carl Oglesby was writing about "Yankees" versus "Cowboys." In 1975 Kirkpatrick Sale wrote *Power Shift*, which described the rise of a cowboy-populated "Southern Rim," right-wing and rich in oil, defense contracts, and high-technology businesses. Sale then offered a convoluted theory of recent American politics based on Yankee-Cowboy antagonism. Unfortunately for Sale, the term "Southern Rim" (which was populated by "Rimsters," by the way) never caught on, and so rather than leading a regal, op-ed-piece-writing life today, Sale is hawking another category he calls Human Scale.

Meanwhile, as 1976 began, the Sunbelt was, as journalistic categories go, in a position roughly resembling that of a widely respected character actor. It was always working

—appearing in a textbook here, TV documentary there—but it was not a star. On the morning of February 9, 1976, however, everything changed for the Sunbelt. It became the subject of a five-part series *The New York Times*.

SUNBELT REGION LEADS NATION'S GROWTH OF POPULATION, said the first day's headline. "Area Spans Southern Half of Country." The new peg was a Census Bureau report released the day before, showing that only in the South and Southwest had metropolitan areas grown in the early 1970s. In fairness, this was an interesting and important fact, left to its own. It was not left on its own. It was extrapolated from and made to define a new region that was changing American history. The first day's main story began:

ALONG INTERSTATE 95 IN VIRGINIA—All day and through the lonely night, the moving vans push southward, 14-wheeled boxcars of the highway, changing the demographic face of America.

They load up in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Wilmington, riding low and heavy, bound for seaside communities in the Carolinas, the rolling suburbs outside Atlanta, the retirement villages of Florida.

West of here, other trucks and highways carry a similar cargo, bound from Cleveland, Detroit or Chicago to Houston, Phoenix or California.

They return toward the North in a few days, riding high and empty, racing to shoehorn another household into the rig in Providence or Pittsburgh for transplanting to the nation's fastest-growing region, the Sunbelt, a warm-climate band that sweeps across the southern rim of the country from Virginia to southern California.

Leaving aside the question of how a reporter standing on Interstate 95 even a very smart reporter, could possibly know all that (and where did he put his typewriter?), the Sunbelt was now, thanks to the *Times*, in the big time of categories. In the course of a week, virtually every one of today's clichés about the Sunbelt was set forth (FEDERA-

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Where tomorrow's
Melvilles, Conrads, Twains
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THE FOURTH ESTATE

FUNDS POUR INTO SOUTHERN STATES; HOUSTON, AS ENERGY CAPITAL, SETS PACE IN SUNBELT BOOM). Immediately, the rest of the press started to crank up on the subject. At this point the Sunbelt notion was a big hit with editors in New York because it dovetailed so perfectly with the fiscal crisis that was going on before their eyes, but it had yet to catch on among editors in Washington.

Then, in June 1976, *National Journal*, a magazine for institutions that do business with the federal government, came out with a long and detailed examination of federal spending by region, which showed that northern states paid more in taxes than they got back in federal spending, while Sunbelt states got back more than they paid, creating a "balance of payments" deficit for the North. This was essentially the *Times*'s "federal funds pour into southern states" story spun out in great detail, but the addition of the specific, quantifiable "balance of payments" gimmick was enough to wake Washington up to the Sunbelt. Rep. Michael Harrington (Dem.-Mass.) started a Northeast-Midwest Economic Advancement Coalition designed to get the federal government to spend more money in the North. In retaliation, the Southern Growth Policies Board, a sleepy North Carolina foundation, started a Washington office to do the opposite. Now earnest young staff members could be hired to study the Sunbelt, and consultants' studies could be commissioned, and Houston bureaus could be opened, and in many other ways the Sunbelt could begin actually to provide people with a livelihood.

In the early days of the Sunbelt, Bernard Weinstein was living in Albany, New York, and working at the Institute for Public Policy Alternatives. Then he lost his job, not because of the decline of the North but because New York got a new governor, Hugh Carey, who abolished the Institute because it was a creation of Nelson Rockefeller. Weinstein sent his résumé around, and the University of Texas at Dallas had a job open. He moved in the fall of 1975 and immediately wrote an article

for *Society* magazine called "What New York Can Learn From Texas." So when the *Times* series and the *National Journal* story broke, he seen his opportunities and he took 'em. "I got interested in the politics of it," he says. "I did popular writing. I got on the Sunbelt-Frostbelt circuit. You might say circus. We traveled around having seminars." He set up a little center, which helped attract to Dallas a crack group of Sunbeltologists from the North. He went to Washington for two years to lobby for the Southern Growth Policies Board. He came back to Dallas. Reporters began calling him a lot.

Weinstein and his circle have, if I may grossly oversimplify their work, two main points. First, the Sunbelt is great, because it has a free-enterprising, productive, positive atmosphere, and if migration there causes the North to wither, so much the better. One of Weinstein's colleagues at UT Dallas, Don Hicks, got a job working for the National Commission on an Agenda for the 1980s, and that was essentially the point he made in the Commission's report early in 1981—setting off, by the way, a new avalanche of Sunbelt coverage. Their second point is that the Sunbelt isn't really all that great, and therefore desperately needs the federal balance-of-payments surplus in order to alleviate the grinding poverty that is the region's legacy. This comes close enough to contradicting the first point to make the whole business of Sunbelt advocacy a tricky one. But somebody's got to do it.

COVERAGE of an artificial category like the Sunbelt is a challenge, because it's only rarely that anything actually happens on your beat. Instead, you have to write about trends, and that requires a little hard sell. For in-

stance, when the press was discovering the Sunbelt, it was necessary to deprecate the region's previous condition in order to make the trend—prosperity—stand out in dramatic relief. In *Newsweek*'s 1977 cover story "Texas! The Superstate," Texas was described as having started the decade as "Nothing more than a let-turn on the way to California, a god-awful won't-it-ever-end stretch of monotony." But now, magically, it was "the geographic and economic heart of the American Sun Belt, the recently recognized crescent that runs from the tidewater of Virginia to the sands of southern California." The *Times* called Houston "a steam little southeast Texas swamp town commanding little attention and less respect" that suddenly became "no less than the newest, most prosperous, fastest-growing urban industrial center in America."

Once the Sunbelt had been established as booming, the market for stories that began, "Formerly a two-bit piece of nowhere, Phoenix to day..." took a sharp downturn. A new trend was needed. That was where Bud Weinstein came in. He would tell you that things down here weren't really so great, you could visit a slum or two, find a plant that had laid people off, drive over a couple of potholes, and write a story called "The Other Sunbelt." Under the gleaming façade of Houston there were deep problems, and so on. You could go see David Perrin and Al Watkins, the Sunbeltologist at the University of Texas at Austin who are way to the left of Weinstein and his group but who also like to talk about the Sunbelt's problems.

Now the Other Sunbelt trend (and its cousin, the Northern Cities Bounce Back trend) seems to have run its course, and it's unclear what will come next. We seem to be in a complex period in which trend succeed

Unskilled Northerners Find Sun Belt Job Climate Cooling

The New York Times, August 18, 1981, page 1

end rapidly, and this will probably continue until the northern media lose their Houston bureaus. Last June 3, the *Times* ran a front-page story called NEW WAVE OF JOBLESS MIGRANTS REVERSES OLD PATH FROM NORTH, about how unemployed blue-collar workers were streaming from the Midwest to Texas. On August 18, in short weeks later, the trend had nearly ended, and the *Times* front-page carried a story—by the same reporter—called UNSKILLED NORTHERNERS FIND SUN BELT JOB CLIMATE COOLING. Weinstein was quoted at length. "Dallas is really becoming more like Cleveland," he said.

In recent months Weinstein has put forth the view—and so, consequently, has *The New York Times*—that the real battle isn't North versus South, but East versus West, and that the Sunbelt has been supplanted by the Growth Belt. It's still too early to tell whether this new category will take off, even with the backing of the *Times*.

THE ONE small disappointment in Weinstein's career is that he has not made much of an impact among people who actually live and work in Texas and the rest of the alleged Sunbelt. In particular, the business establishment of Dallas seems just to breeze along in its gleaming skyscrapers without feeling the need to consult him.

"I find it curious," he says, "that we have done policy analysis with national recognition but we're rarely called in to do work locally. That's why I used to do all this B.S. in the local press—to get recognition locally. Now I just want the national press. I've developed relationships with *The New York Times* in Houston and Denver and with the *Washington Post*, and that really pays off. Maybe they don't want to hear the bad news here."

He's partly right. Also, they don't want to listen to professors and journalists here as much as they do in the Northeast. While extremely different culturally, in terms of its economic development Texas is at roughly the moment that Howells

and Dreiser wrote about in their novels when it happened in the North. A society that is growing this fast makes businessmen its heroes. In Washington, where I used to live, a daily newspaper reporter who goes to a party full of bank vice presidents will find himself fawned over; in Dallas, at the same sort of party, he'll find the people he talks to casting desperate glances over his shoulder to see if there's anybody more important around. The newspapers in Houston don't promote categories and trends because they aren't good enough to have bad ideas. The notion that Texas is thriving because of federal policies, so appealing in New York and Washington, doesn't have many adherents here, because it's no fun to believe it. Stories in the papers here that make reference to the Sunbelt are usually traceable to Weinstein or Don Hicks or David Perry; businessmen and politicians talk about the Sunbelt only when trying to con the Yankees.

For the home audience, there is a different myth here. It's the saga of Texas—a land of hardworking

people with a ranching tradition, rougher and less moony than the South, neither as flaky nor as glamorous as California, now in the midst of obtaining sweet revenge on its northern oppressors. It's fun to ascribe the revenge to moral superiority—or, for the slightly more technical, to a richer supply of human capital—but in fairness it must be mentioned, too, that the OPEC embargo of 1973, and the subsequent tenfold increase in the price of Texas's basic commodity, has helped. That last point is not a big part of the official mythology here. But then neither is it a big part of the official mythology of the Sunbelt, which would have you think that Texas prosperity comes from federal dollars. The facts aren't really crucial to either myth. When a national magazine does a cover story on Texas, it's all gleaming office spires and luxurious suburbs. At *Texas Monthly*, marketed to the very occupants of this world, our best-selling cover was a picture of a cowboy on a horse.

HARPER'S/FEBRUARY 1982

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CLARE BOOTHE LUCE

What a woman had to do to make it in the American Century

by Wilfrid Sheed

Notes on a Career I: Clare Solo, 1903-39

CLARE ACTUALLY DID have a stage mother, as well as a legitimate stage name. Her mother was one Anna Clara Snyder, an actress, and her own last name, she says, was shared by an ancestor called John Wilkes Booth, a man who also hung around theaters.

It is a neat connection, Clare and John: two theatrical snipers, who combined drama and politics with combustible effects. It is very much her kind of story, with the kind of symmetry she looks for and suspiciously often finds. If she were writing an autobiography, it would probably teem with coincidences, juxtapositions, droll outcomes. (Her Grandfather Boothe, who was a Baptist pastor, added the "e," she says, to distance his family at once from the assassin.)

William Boothe, Clare's father, was an aspiring actor who left home early and often—first his father's, then his wife's—flitting across Clare's screen almost too fast to be an influence. And if Clare was not exactly born in a prop box, the show girl Boothe married—Clare's mother, Anna Clara

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rawing by Antonio

Snyder (Ann Clare for everyday use)—could at least make much melodrama out of an absent husband and just about anything else that came along.

Mr. Boothe, an indifferent provider on his best day, finally gave up altogether and left his wife and two infants, Clare and David, high and dry—although in letters he wrote near the end of his life (which enraged their mother) he claimed to have supported them all along. "He couldn't have sent us much," says Clare, citing the near-tenement they lived in on Columbus Avenue when she was young, where she remembers bathing in the kitchen sink, to a smell of cabbage.

Her mother, the former chorus girl, was the granddaughter of a stable owner (social equivalent of a trucking garage) in Hoboken, which meant solid enough German-American stock. But the Snyder family was depleted by the illnesses of the period—T.B., spinal meningitis, and so on—and what was left of it did not hit it off with the Protestant Boothes anyway. Even without the dreaded showbiz connection, an interfaith marriage would have meant automatic ostracism (now, Clare says, "you're happy if they just marry anybody"), so Ann Snyder Boothe suddenly had nothing to go on except good looks and a fanatical belief in the American dream ("Up the ladder, up the ladder"), which

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she injected into her son and daughter in killer doses, with drastically opposite results. The first words they heard were of success; the first lesson they learned was suspicion.

It goes without saying that a woman in Ann Clare's position depended a good deal on the friendship of men, up to the limit imposed by middle-class appearances, which reigned above even money or love. (C.: "I don't know about *her* morals, but I had to be pure.") The family standard of living presumably bumped up and down to the tune of Mother's courtships, and Clare allows that there were several. For the most part the suitors were just part of the scenery, not, as Clare describes it, the great shaking traumas they would be to children in novels. But one particular man almost qualified as a steady boyfriend and was perhaps Clare's greatest indirect benefactor, a rough but kindly Jewish tire merchant called Joseph Jacobs.

It was Jacobs who administered the lesson that would later evolve into the moral of *The Women*, although I gather this form of it is a bit of a chestnut in Jewish families. It seems that Joe liked to tell a story about a man called Ike, who encouraged his son to jump into his arms from various heights with cries of "Trust me, trust me," until when full confidence was established, he dropped the wretched lad. "You see, you gotta be suspicious of everybody," Ike explains to his crushed offspring.

The two fatherless kids did not need this par-

ticular piece of advice right then, and burst into tears at the story, to their mother's bewilderment. Instead of comforting them, she scolded them for crying, while Jacobs scratched his head, the most bewildered of them all.

Jacobs was to learn his own lesson, though perhaps he already knew it. Although his support of the family was unflagging in every pinch, and Ann Clare seems to have been as devoted to him as she could be, she flatly refused to marry him. "I can't," she told the children, "I can't have a Jewish father for my children. They'll never get anywhere." Reeling from her own rejection by Congregationalists, Ann Clare was taking no chances. (Clare herself says of Jews in general, "It's nice to have a chosen people that really worked out.")

Ann Clare regarded herself as potential royalty, which meant, to her operatic soul, a proper marriage and a heartbreaking affair. When she finally did marry a respectable Protestant named Dr. Albert Austin, the groom found himself playing pinocchio nightly with Joseph Jacobs. The doctor knew the score too, and Jacobs remained part of the family until Ann Clare and he died together in a stalled car on a railroad track in 1938. The once penniless Mrs. Boothe left a comfortable amount in her will, although by then nobody needed it.



Ann Clare Boothe

OLD-TIMERS still tend to think of Clare as a child actress, and psychologically they're right. She did try literally to be one in her early teens, but according to her, failed abysmally, being easily the worst natural talent in the West. Her mother took her to a screen test in the then film capital of Fort Lee, New Jersey; but whatever kind of actress Clare might have been, it wasn't silent. A homonym called Claire Luce has created some confusion, and such is Clare's versatility that a ballplayer called Clain Luce would probably cause confusion too. But she is adamant that she cannot act at all when she is trying. When people who excel at most things are only so-so at one of them, they're likely to exaggerate how badly they do it. So we'll never know for sure the quality of young Clare's acting. Either way, though, acting is at the core of things, as it has had to be with many successful women.

Unfortunately, while Ann Snyder seemed hell bent on nurturing a stage brat, Clare wanted, by the age of ten at least, to be something more like an intellectual—a category her mother could barely have heard of (surely it wasn't part of the American Dream?). So Clare's schooling was dangerously skimpy for someone of her intelligence. Three years of upper-middle-class gentility at St. Mary's in Garden City and Castle School in Tarrytown were her total schooling, plus some scraps of the public variety. Her mother no doubt loved Clare to distraction

nd was gallantly dedicated to making her a great dy, but she knew very well that intellect had sthng to do with this. Quite the reverse. Three ars of schooling were more than enough for a eat lady; after that one might become shrill and inionated.

If Castle School was a bit of a finishing school, may have come in handy at that. It was quite a assy place for a kid who'd made screen tests in rt Lee, and who in background and pedigree both as and wasn't classy—a Boothe from Columbus venue being something like a Biddle from Flat-ish. Although she now lived in Greenwich, and was fast study, it seems likely that there was still some ofessor Higginsing to be done as her mother ished her energetically from square to square in e great American game.

The game was briefly interrupted when Clare ruptly left home at seventeen to take a job cutting wers in a paper factory. "I had to get away," e says simply, like Dickens dismissing his black-factory period. I imagine a spell of eerie equi-rium and sweet acquiescence followed by an inner pllosion. This would happen again more than once her life: bursts of petulance, like willpower boil-g over.

Anyway, the escape into paper flowers was, by its ry nature, temporary: a breather. In the long run wouldn't have just thwarted her mother, it would ve thwarted *her*, and her precious life of the mind. (ou're not supposed to *end up* as a flower girl.) nd the same went for just about any escape open her. Clare could hardly get into Harvard at this int, or make a good marriage by herself. So ile she might have some reservations about her other's methods, there weren't many other methods ailable for a young woman who'd contracted am-tion.

So Clare rejoined forces with Mrs. Boothe, per-ps on more equal terms, and the Big Push was i. By this time Ann Sr. had acquired her new hus-and, Dr. Austin, who, according to Clare, was New England cold" without a kiss or a hug for r or David, but decent enough otherwise. More the intermediate point (Clare was getting a bit g for a hugging stepfather), he was also a sur-on, who'd been given a grant to visit Germany. wasn't enough to wave at the aristocracy when e got there, but it was a start.

American mothers and daughters must have been ogging the gangplanks in 1919 to get at what was f of Europe. And penniless noblemen must have ed the docks waiting for them. In the musical-meddy version, the transaction was simple: a for-ne for a title. But Clare was at a disadvantage. e was only beautiful. An earlier biographer, ephen Shaddegg, reports a poignant encounter ith a Guards officer who tracked her all the way ck to America, only to turn the cab around when e saw her humble house.

Clare recalls a gruesome shooting weekend with some nobleman or other, spent trudging the moors in long underwear (jaegers, as they were called). No title in the world was worth a life of that. In general, her romantic forays in England all have this soggy feel about them.

Allowing for the cooling and ironizing over the years, it seems reasonable to guess that her mother was working a bit harder at matchmaking for the sake of matchmaking than Clare—who perhaps sensed it wasn't going to be as difficult for her as it had been for Ann. Whether the blushful futility of her mother's campaigns began to get to her, or whether an innate wish for something else began to assert itself, Clare soon ceased climbing, or being pushed, after wimpy title holders and began to edge toward her ultimate grail, self-made Americans. She seems to have had in the back of her mind a lofty, quasi-Shavian view of one's sexual vocation as a mating of champions. The theater that influenced them both had improved since her mother's day and Clare was an ardent Shavian. But this instinct was hard to satisfy, or even define, in the limited world her mother steered her through.

MRS. AUSTIN and daughter settled in Old Greenwich, Connecticut, to await, or encourage, developments. Developments turned out to be one George Brokaw, the charming, tipsy heir to a garment-business fortune. As Clare tells it, the marriage (in 1921) was arranged practically behind her back, like a baseball trade—Mother's last deal; but this did not keep the Brokaw relatives from whispering the word "prostitute" in her hearing ("Actually, I was the most timid of virgins"). No one seems able to remember any reason at all for marrying Brokaw *except* his money, but Clare says he was nice enough when sober (she didn't know about his drinking then), and he did manage to sire a bright, attractive daughter, Ann—the only child Clare was to have, though she says she always wanted more, and tried more than once.

In a fit of grandiosity, Brokaw decided to transfer his summer drinking from Piping Rock, Long Island, to a Vanderbilt pile named Beach Mound in Newport, Rhode Island. This brought Clare bang up against the Wimbledon, the Grand Prix, the very Olympics, of snobbery. Newport easily rebuffed the cream of the new Irish society, the Murrays, Cudihys, and MacDonells—driving them all the way to Southampton (where they could rebuff the Kellys and Kennedys), so one can imagine the ice on the verandas as the upwardly striving Clare Boothe Brokaw hove into sight.

Even openly ambitious men were frowned on in these circles: ambitious women were monsters. Clare pluckily gave Sunday afternoon musicales, to which

ray down to help support a Jane Fonda peace initiative. It's a perfect Clare story. Fortunes often round around in these O. Henry ways, and you just have to be a good sport about it. According to Edward Teichman's book *Mr. Fonda*, Frances Brokaw Fonda also earned everything she got. Brokaw beat her up as he had Clare, prior to drowning mysteriously in the sanitarium swimming pool.

CLARE HAD NOW reached the outer limits of her mother's dream: Ann Snyder had seen no further, except perhaps to see more of the same—bigger millionaires, better polo ponies. For a while, Clare lived it out loyally and to the hilt (how am I doing, Ma?). She was whispered to have a social adviser, not so uncommon in those days, but good for a giggle perhaps. Rumor also had our gay divorcée being dressed by four maids at once and sending flowers to herself at her office, when she had an office. Flowers, dressing room—these are actress stories. Every time Clare left the house she was mounting a stage.

This was the swashbuckling Clare of the late Twenties, who seemed to be entering the Jazz Age just as everyone else was leaving. The last few years with Brokaw and the first months after constitute one of her times in the desert, years spent trying to determine who she was and what she was for. She drifted aimlessly for a while, even in and out of a psychiatrist's office at record speed, with no role in sight, let alone the four or five that were about to spring at her. Destiny, of course, always seems inevitable afterward. But back in 1929, Clare had no career models, no counselors worth a damn, nothing but her own mother wit. She simply had to invent herself, for better or worse.

To get down to practicalities: there was clearly no future for her in the Brokaw world. The family still despised her as a fortune hunter, and families like that know how to make these things clear, saving a lot of time to devote to it. She must already have been bored stiff anyway. A posh life crying on dresses was only supportable if you were someone trying on dresses: one would need a hush and a whisper of salesgirls and a scraping of managers to enjoy that particular dream.

Clare had her own daughter, Ann, now, whom she loved ardently if fitfully, and at times she felt that that was enough—though she was determined not to replay Mrs. Boothe's role of professional mother. Ann had the most normal upbringing that money could buy.

But bringing up her daughter was not a career. Clare had just not been fashioned to be either a homebody or a jewel horse. For a while she seems to have been known as a socialite at large, and I'm sure she did it with sparkle, because that's the way



Clare Boothe Luce and Herbert at the premiere of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in January 1935.

you do it (she is a stickler for technique). But after years of this with Brokaw and months of spinning her wheels without him, she decided that if other vocations would not call her, she would call them. So she got herself a job.

It has often been told (by herself as it happens) how (in 1929) she sat in the Condé Nast offices, unhired and unwanted, writing picture captions for *Vogue*, which *Vogue* vaguely ran without knowing who she was. This is the kind of story that's pleasant if you like the protagonist, but with a very slight tilt it becomes part of the conniving-Clare legend: rich woman angles for job she doesn't need. But in fact the rich woman *had* to angle in this case, because she was at a curious disadvantage. Condé Nast had expressly told Clare at some dinner or other that he would never hire her because Society ladies had no stamina. (He may have changed his mind about this later, because Society ladies also make no demands.) So Clare barged into the office, learned that one of the caption writers was missing, and announced brightly that that was exactly what she was sent for. I think Clare likes the story because she would rather be thought Machiavellian than a vamp, doing what she called "monkey jobs," which involve hanging by one's tail. Anyway, none of this would matter with anyone else, because she wrote perfectly good captions.

She had to, to hold her first real job (a year later), which was on *Vanity Fair*, *Vogue's* bright-



Clare Booth Luce, magazine editor of *Vanity Fair*.

sister publication in the Nast chain. Although it ran the best text a smallish budget could buy (i.e., throwaway pieces by famous writers, brighter ones by unknowns, and a barrel of staff-written filler, published under a panoply of pen names), *Vanity Fair* really lived on its photographs, particularly its portrait photographs, which cried out for captions, cheeky or sonorous, as the case might be. (Dorothy Parker had worked there, setting a very fast pace for wit. "Brevity is the soul of lingerie" first appeared in *V.F.*) And the magazine was much too small to carry a dumb blonde.

"You have a young man under your bed," said Frank Crowninshield, the editor in chief, when he saw the captions. "That was the first taste," she says, "of always having a man under your bed before you did anything." Naturally it was the first taste—it was only her first job.

In no time Clare was writing some pretty funny pieces, parodies and make-believe conversations (Gandhi-meets-Garbo kind of thing), under the name Jerome Jerome and others, as well as captions for her own, mordantly named department, "We Nominate for Oblivion." Great finger exercises for anyone. Once again, as if to establish her credentials for all time, Clare submitted her first piece

under a pen name. Only when it was accepted did she come out in the open.

Skimming through Clare's bound volumes, one imagines a lobby jammed with celebrities jostling to have their pictures taken. *Vanity Fair* must have practically met the boats and brought the first-class list over in steam cars. Nobody left town without his mug shots recorded.

THUS BEGAN Clare's professional association with Celebrity as such. It was certainly a felicitously chosen career to advance in, because doing it we almost demanded self-promotion. And no doubt Clare pursued her targets, her little Churchills and Maughams, with fiendish ingenuity, in the best *Front Page* tradition—though there is no record of her dressing up as a plumber or meter reader as other in her trade have done—using her good looks to the full (imagine a *Front Page* reporter with such looks not using them), but the magazine did need the pictures and stories the victim provided, and she landed enough of them to be made editor in chief in 1931: a professional acknowledgment and not a beauty-contest prize.

Something else she used besides her looks was her late-Empire style, faintly operatic, left over from her previous career as Mrs. Brokaw. I like to picture a dowager here in full regalia, pounding the block—diverting, and I wouldn't put it past her. But I'm afraid she only looked like that to the ink-stained wretches of the press. Photographs suggest that she owned the world's greatest supply of business suits and dresses. Unfortunately one can't smell them to find out if she was staggering under the load of perfume that usually rounds off these accounts.

But really I think the subject is aura: a personal manner as alien to a pressroom, that seedy redoubt of democracy, as Harry Luce's. (Since *Vanity Fair* was not your ordinary pressroom, she may have received some furtive competition in the dressing up department.) It is hard to believe from the regalia accounts of her that she was just twenty-six when she got the job, and not some battle-hardened veteran of Café Society. She was feeling her way—but arrogantly. Don't let them know you're frightened. One person who was impressed by this performance while apparently seeing through it (he called her "the poor kid"), was the next significant man in her life: Bernard Baruch, Society's favorite sage whom she met on her *Vanity Fair* rounds. Baruch had what the French call *l'art de se faire valoir* (the knack of writing your own price tag) to as high a degree as Clare was ever accused of; and precisely because he was willing to remain always a consort never a battleship, he became a great one, a star in his own right—and a wonderful model for a woman

Baruch couldn't marry Clare or anyone else, because of a mentally troubled wife at home. (He kept telling her to wait—but his wife didn't die until six months after Clare married Harry Luce.) Her interest in Baruch suggests that there would be no more Brokaws in her life. The frontal assault on society was over; she had done what her mother wanted. Now the subject was politics.

Clare began to learn the nuts and bolts from the master, Franklin D. Roosevelt himself, to whom Baruch routinely introduced her before unloading his latest advice. Later, FDR's hearty-male condescension to Clare would have unwanted consequences, and he may have regretted getting her started in even a humble way, because after campaigning vigorously against the Republicans, she became, in her terms, the scullery maid in Roosevelt's kitchen cabinet, close enough to the stove to see the New Deal being prepared. (Her specific niche was in a wing of the NRA called the Theater Code Board, and all she remembers about it is that you can't get theater people to agree to anything.)

People are still surprised to hear of what sounds like a left-wing lapse in such a conservative life. But prior to Luce, Clare was not considered primarily political by anyone but herself. (If she had trouble being taken seriously as a writer of captions, you can imagine her chances as a political theorist.) This was Clare's swinging period, and she threw herself into it with her usual thoroughness. Either she or her friend Helen Norton Lawrenson (I believe the latter) actually coined the phrase "Café Society" for that meritocracy of foppishness and social inutility that was gradually driving real society into the back pages, and which fit the phrase and the magazine *Vanity Fair* to perfection. Café Society's great spawning ground was Broadway, and Clare had all the contacts there that she could possibly need, before she even knew what to do with them.

The icy Clare of legend has a special kind of goofy grin for office memories, and she wears it full force when she recalls, for instance, an article he'd edited herself that mysteriously had the good old Prince of Wales following Brenda Frazier, the ultimate debutante, into the bathroom instead of the ballroom—a piece of irredeemable childishness that casts a nice light on the slaphappy mood at the magazine. Clare was a good editor who worked hard at the drudgery: layouts, scheduling, and whatnot. It sounds like a well-rounded life what with massages at the Waldorf and celebrity office lunches for the likes of Thomas Wolfe and Aldous Huxley—at which Clare on occasion was known to hold forth.

Clare had formed a sensible habit of boning up on a man's specialty in advance, which her critics consider malevolent (presumably a journalist should keep her mind completely blank up to the last moment), but sometimes it became too much for her, and she forgot whose specialty they were talking

about. This must have made her a bulldozer of a coquette: one who would rather be taken seriously than to bed any day, and who used every feminine wile just to get a hearing. But I believe it also harks back to her days as a society hostess, when, sandwiched forever between two strange men (never women), you'd better have something to say, or go slowly mad with boredom. Anyway, if she was already collecting dialogue for the stage, a generous amount of it was her own.

ALTHOUGH *Life* was still several years away, Clare's blueprint dates back to the *Vanity Fair* years (1930-34). *Life* was to be a sort of *Vanity Fair* for the masses. It would still be spellbound by Names, but without the old, we-precious-few irony; it would be as handsome as ever, but in a streamlined, less idiosyncratic way. The satire—well, perhaps that's putting it too strongly. There's no point in dissecting, or lamenting, the differences here, because it wound up not being Clare's magazine after all. One of the men whom Clare had nominated for *Vanity Fair*'s Hall of Fame fetched up with both Clare and the magazine, one under each arm. Henry R. Luce was about to come into view (1935, to be precise), and we'll get to him in a moment. But already Clare was eyeing another career: following the arc of vocation that ran from the satirical exchanges of *Stuffed Shirts* through the imaginary dialogues (the Pope meets Garbo, etc.) of *Vanity Fair*, she began writing her own plays.

A Broadway play is so much an event, designed down to the bit parts to explode in your face on one particular night, that it is hard to judge any one of them fairly from the scrawny instructions known as a script. In late 1936 *The Women* cer-



"I AM CLARE": Clare Booth Luce, the talented and beautiful writer, before an early morning plunge on the beach in Miami, where she is spending her vacation.

tainly exploded, to a splutter of critics, and has done so ever since in many productions in the most unlikely languages. Nevertheless, I reread the play with some foreboding, realizing how much hung on it; if she really was a good playwright it gave *bona fides* to the other less measurable things she'd done. (Who can really measure a congressman, or even a best-dressed woman?)

One first-class achievement was needed to clinch the rest, and *The Women* to my mind does it: comic enough to meet the Broadway demand for a laugh every thirty seconds, without ever being silly or ingratiating. In fact, it was so good that rumors started immediately that George S. Kaufman was the man under the bed this time (which Kaufman gallantly denied, on the sensible grounds that if he'd written it he'd have signed it and taken the money); everybody knew that old glamour puss couldn't write a play by herself. Ghosts were summoned from the vasty deep, stopping only at Francis Bacon.

The Women was a lucky play because it was highly commercial without having to try. What was on Clare's mind was on the audience's, too: the rich bitches on the stage were playing to their sisters. Everyone who had ever stolen a man, or had had one stolen, was in there—enough to pack a theater forever. The almost accidental power of *The Women* would have been enough to frighten many an author away from real self-expression. What may well have begun as a satire on certain types, like *Stuffed Shirts*, had ended as a timeless tableau of Evil. Although it is a comedy convention from Aristophanes through Wilde to make all your characters heartless, Clare simply has too much conviction. Her heartlessness rang a bell. The beauty parlor and jewelry counter were not some *Iolanthe* fairy tale, but hell itself.

Clare had two other Broadway successes: *Kiss the Boys Goodbye* (1938) and *Margin for Error* (1939). Then she stopped. Although she married Henry Luce at the beginning of her playwriting career, he had no discernible impact on the plays themselves—except perhaps as unwitting material. (He did read bits aloud to her, and I've always wondered what parts he read in *The Women*.) But now the mighty professional team of Clare and Harry was about to be forged.

So there's no holding him back any longer. The dazzled young husband watching quietly from the wings has suddenly marched center stage and made an announcement. "Harry didn't care for theater people," Clare explains now, "so we saw less and less of them." Thus, just like that, our pioneer gave up what she did best and began the inexorable crawl to politics. Although she took random stabs at restoring herself as a playwright, her roots had been yanked out cleanly.

What is interesting is how quickly she backed away from her gift, almost as soon as she discov-

ered it. Not that she didn't attempt several more plays over the years: but she never again pulled out all the stops, or exposed her own psyche. It was certainly a dangerous gift for a woman in her position to have. She had written a parody of her own "type" in *The Women*, but instead of getting her off the hook, the parody was used against her. She had written the perfect Clare Luce anecdote, and became the prototype for all Clare Luce anecdotes.

Since this was empathically not what she wanted to be taken for, she did no more such powerful impersonations, but took to ingenious plotting instead—very weak tea after *The Women*. So if Harry finally shooed her showbiz friends away, it was probably not an unwelcome rescue.

Notes on a Career II: 1935-49

ACCORDING to a much-polished anecdote Harry pulled his watch on her and said, "Got to go the first two times they met in 1935, and the third time he did not. Instead he briskly expressed his intention of marrying her forthwith, as one might announce a merger. This would certainly be a very powerful thing to do and a knockout for a romantic like Clare. But although I'm suspicious of how often such proposals turn up in memoirs, this one is as likely as most—if only because of the difficulty of holding Harry's attention.

I assume that Clare allowed the sexual magnetism to be turned on (it was seldom off in those days) which cut the preliminaries for a busy man. But the tales that quickly circulated of her seducing him in a dazzling white dress, etc., have a Victorian ring to them. People have to get into bed somehow and track suits are seldom worn.

The possibility that there was a powerful mutual attraction hedged with normal lunges and hesitations seemed ruled out by their importance and ambition. Yet Harry was in fact precisely her type physically, he was close enough to other men whom I know she finds interesting (although Harry photographed grimly) to suggest that their romance wasn't just power calling to power. Mentally, he was an extension of Baruch by other means: more global, but just as American, another confirmation of Mother's home truths. And morally, he was a decent man who knew his way in the jungle, like the heroine of *The Women*, like America in the world, as they both saw it.

Nevertheless, it was important for her to make clear for the record that he pursued her, because the nonrecord, or myth, ran all the other way. To begin with, Harry was already married and had two sons, not to mention two edifying magazines. The Other Woman was always public enemy number one in those days, whatever the circumstances;

out in this case, the circumstances were bad too. Harry looked like a pillar of rectitude (an old Presbyterian trick—his sexual rectitude was to prove just about the national average), and he also looked absentminded, as if a smart woman could steal him while he wasn't looking.

Clare for her part lived in the scandal regions: divorcee on the way up could hardly avoid scandal, even if she slept under armed guard. Wallis Simpson was the prototype of the day and Wallie's desperate maneuvering showed a thin-lipped world how villainous the type really was. So the record could say what it liked; the gossip had Clare reclining on a tiger skin all the way.

And, of course, she had to go and write *The Women*, which is all about husband-snatching, while the gossip mills were still spinning. Clare's motives were presumably as mixed as those of anybody who makes a royal marriage (as crowned heads go, Luce made more sense romantically than your run-of-the-mill sheikh or princeling). Just as *Vanity Fair* was the perfect job for launching herself, so was Harry the perfect husband for a second-stage boost. But she loved him for being that, and still does. It was her Shavian dream come true—Man and Superwoman. She would consider it immoral just to use a man to get ahead.

What's interesting in terms of the period is that Harry's motives may have been just as complicated, and certainly anything but absentminded, yet nobody thought of him as the scheming one. Clare made a marvelous jewel for his crown, a worthy consort as he assumed his role as world leader, and testament to his go-getting virility. The effect of him together was like an inspired clash of colors. It worked. His gruffness sparkled, her flippancy was oleomnified. A wonderful couple.

The most diverting speculation about this mighty mating of dowries is, of course, the most cynical one. By the fateful third meeting, Clare had got across to Harry her plans for *Life* magazine, and in his headstrong romantic way, Luce announced, "I don't want any more babies, but if you marry me, I'll start your magazine."

Time, Inc. in those days was a very stag affair and it wanted no part of the boss's wife from the first. So although Clare could send all the memos he wanted (and she is a formidable memo sender), he wasn't allowed any piece of the magazine she'd dreamed up. And with the speed of journalistic evolution, *Life* began to look less like her idea anyway. Anyone can say, "Let's have a magazine with pictures"—that's not an idea. There were already several *Life* look-alikes in Britain and France. So why was the lady making a fuss? Did she want credit for everything?

As it happens, her complete authorship was established in a most satisfactory way. A couple of photographers did sue *Life* for plagiarism and, in distraction, Time, Inc.'s lawyers finally called in

Clare as a witness. It turned out that while *Vanity Fair* was being sinking gracefully toward oblivion back in 1933 and 1934, Condé Nast asked all hands to submit dummies for possible new magazines. Clare did hers with the help of Dr. Agals, the art director, and one day a couple of photographers who worked around the place lit on it and made it their own. Clare rummaged in the attic, and there it was, including even the suggested purchase of *Life* itself, the moribund humor magazine. Clare, perhaps a little giddy with vindication, asked the judge, "Should I show my legs, the most beautiful in the West?" In those days you could have legs or you could start magazines, but not both. Clare had a rare chance, in a court of law, to prove you could do both.

THE WORLD of Luce, as World War II loomed up, was theatrically much more exciting than the shrunken New York stage. Harry offered her an empire at a time when most people couldn't even get a passport.

Clare's war seems like a Technicolor extravaganza at this distance. As a *Life* reporter, she would turn up in France with Wallis Simpson, and then the next thing you knew she'd be in Burma with General Wingate at the start of his bloody march.

One hitch was that she wasn't quite a one-man show anymore. She was the boss's wife now, which meant special treatment whether she wanted it or not (she obviously wanted it but was too smart not to see the drawbacks). Among the letters I solicited for this project, several allude sourly to private Clare Luce latrines that had to be run up to meet her rapid advance through Italy as a congresswoman in 1944. But she mentions this herself as a particular embarrassment. Other tales have her bumping people off planes and pulling the usual scoop-getting tricks that one is resigned to in reporters but not in publishers' wives.

In 1940 she wrote *Europe in the Spring*, which hints of politics to come but is also a conscientious stab at reporting "the way it was" during the twilight of the phony war. *Europe in the Spring* is not just a stunt, another show of versatility "very good for a playwright"—but a rare specimen of satirical political analysis. The book's angle is strictly the view from the top: her subject is the babble of the best people as the ship goes down. She uses all the stratagems of *Stuffed Shirts* and the plays to place you at an imaginary Buñuel dinner table, where the talk goes on among politicians, businessmen, faded nobility, the sort of people Luce's automatically meet from China to Borneo. Germany cannot win, one hears, because it will run out of manganese; the Americans should come in right away, although we don't need them—and we certainly



PERFE, ITALY: Clare Boothe Luce, glamorous congresswoman, is entertained by British soldiers in the Benbenster 1st, Rome, Italy, during a visit to the Division for Army Cadets in March 1945. During her visit, Mrs. Luce also called at headquarters of the Jewish Brigade, and a British consulate (leaving station to the forward battle area).

don't want them at the peace table; then there is the British fleet, the French *poilu*, the dikes of Holland, the rubber of Malaysia, the magic line of M. Maginot—the mental activity was unflagging, and not necessarily ill informed, but it all led in the same direction, that we don't have to do anything right now. There was even talk of holding a regular fashion season that year to show that the French had not lost their values.

The book seems to make a case for direct American intervention; but a slight shyness about intervention indicates the delicate position Clare and other East Coast Republicans occupied in 1940. On the one hand, this group was just about to maneuver the proto-internationalist Wendell Willkie past isolationist Robert Taft at the Republican Convention; but on the other, they would then have to campaign against the dreaded Roosevelt, who was suspected of dragging us into war. But anyone who reads the whole book will have no doubt that Clare was fairly itching to take off the gloves and paste Herr Hitler a good one in the chops. Clare hated Nazism every bit as much as she has ever hated communism, which is not invariably the case on the right.

While Clare was still feverishly working on *Europe in the Spring*, Harry announced that they were going to have dinner with Wendell Willkie. She went to dinner and heard this Willkie expounding on the need for a good businessman, a real administrator—"like you, Harry"—for the next president. Clare told him he was crazy: no one would nominate a businessman in the endless wake of the Depression. Harry kicked Clare smartly under the table, but she persisted, and Harry distastefully kicked

her again. On the way home he explained that the businessman Willkie had in mind was not Harry at all but himself.

Before she knew it, Clare found herself giving a speech for Willkie's favorite businessman. It had not been intended as a speech at all but as a letter to the paper, rebuking Dorothy Thompson for endorsing FDR. But Willkie saw it first and persuaded her that it was too fine for that. So she delivered it full blast in Carnegie Hall: and what might have been an average nasty letter was amplified into a legendary feud.

Talk about your fatal glass of beer: Clare still remembers a sweet little old lady in the front row nodding and smiling every time Clare gave it to Thompson. "I became more and more vitriolic," says Clare, egged on by this harpy (who, of course attends all political rallies).

Clare's further wartime reporting was probably most notable for its enterprise. As a reporter, she was willing to go anywhere, as she had been in the different circumstances of Prohibition. But her situation and temperament decreed that she continue to top-people hop, particularly among generals, her new favorites. She is very funny about Douglas MacArthur, that mountebank of genius, and tells of making tradeoffs with him, e.g., tacitly agreeing not to mention the subject of dyed or thinning hair in exchange for some military scoop or other. Although she has an old-fashioned weakness for pear-shaped oratory, she found MacArthur frankly incredible, because he talked exactly the same way in private as in public, a distinction she is sensitive to. Silhouetted against a Pacific sky and using every effect but organ music, MacArthur told how one man and one man alone stood between America and Asian world dominance, total and forever. Even Harry, with his gluttony for greatness, found this a bit rich for his blood. "He's either a great fraud or a genius," he stopped the elevator to mutter. "Probably both."

In early 1942, Clare made a global sweep covering some 75,000 miles, with a view to doing for Asia and Africa what she had already done for Europe. But without the languages and feel for the culture, it was just not possible. Her Asia seems to have been packed with Occidentals, such as Generals Stilwell and Alexander and Sir Stafford Cripps, presumably as much at sea as she was, and with blarneying Orientals like Nehru and Chiang whose respective lines she didn't have the background to judge.

There was simply no doubt when I met the Luces that Harry was the Asian expert around here, with Clare tagging along like a Chinese bride. Prior to Harry, there is no record of excessive orientalism in Clare's life. The fact was, you simply couldn't marry Harry "Chink" Luce without taking out Chinese citizenship—not precisely from China, of course, but from the mythical kingdom of Yankee-

poo, where the twain of East and West meet around the clock. Westernized Chinese like Chiang Kai-shek, and Chinafied Americans like Luce, seemed in those days to form a bridge between civilizations, but it was a bridge without shores. The actual America and the actual China were as far apart as ever. Luce and Chiang were suspended beautifully in mid-air. Beautifully, because what ended as the China lobby—a dyspeptic rearward action against reality in the Fifties—began as a very attractive dream, a merger of high Chinese culture and Western political savvy with Christianity as the glue. Clare could have become a passable Chinese wife. She struck up a close acquaintanceship with Madame Chiang Kai-shek (who could, of course, “do” an American perfectly) largely out of curiosity, I think, and she still tells more stories about her than the rest of China put together. It was as if she had studied the Madame to see how it was done; and no doubt the Madame was studying her right back. It was one of the great match-ups of the century.

AFTER *Europe in the Spring* the writing days dwindled and the public self grew. Once again, as soon as she got on top of something, she tried something else. She plugged on with her writing and still plugs—but without the lunatic dedication it requires. Instead, the lecture platform became an un-

easy compromise with her early dreams. And in 1942, she entered politics, that ultimate corrupter of style, and went national. That first speech for Willkie led to another and another, as Clare discovered, like so many writers before and since, the joys of the quick payoff, of not having to wait months and years for a response from the crazy little old lady out there. Also, the actress Clare was groomed to be finally had someplace to go.

Clare was elected to Congress twice by a whisker, in 1942 and 1944, in a predominantly Democratic Fourth District in Connecticut, and with no more than the usual whispers about electoral fraud the second time around. Harry undoubtedly encouraged the move from Broadway to Washington—it could hardly have happened without him. So what did the old boy have in mind this time?

“I was the chin that Harry led with,” says Clare. The outrageous young woman could float Harry’s ideas in Congress, and if they didn’t work—well, that’s old Clare for you. She seemed so confident that one assumed she was independent through and through. Her besotted duffer of a husband would tolerate just about anything from her, was the feeling. In turn, the magazine may have felt that it was the chin that Clare was leading with: there were grumbles on Capitol Hill that one couldn’t attack Clare without getting dumped on in *Time*. Which leaves us with at least two chins, leading with each other, which may not be far from the truth. However, Clare now insists, “As a practical matter, since



Photographers' lights surround the Connecticut newspaperwoman as she holds her first Washington press meeting in 1941, just after she was elected.

Republican representative. Newsman sure of blonde Clare bores Luce's exceeding charm and modesty.

he [Harry] committed more sins against more people, if they want to call them that, than I ever did. I got jeered at for his errors." Self-serving, perhaps, but consider that (a) the old duffer was besotted like a fox and wasn't accustomed to losing at anything, and (b) he had, in the *Time* magazine of the Forties, one of the major irritants of all time at his command—as if Clare couldn't make enough trouble all by herself.

If he had any more specific political use for Clare, it can only be deduced from scattered results. Like every politician, she had to compromise so much to get elected that it is hard to tell the one or two issues that really mattered to her. There were those who feared that the Luce was trying to liberalize the party under the mossbacks' noses and produce virtually a new GOP (the far right distrusted the Luce almost as much as the left did in those days). All that can be said for sure is that Clare wanted to win the war any way she knew how, right, left, or around corners. Clare now says, "I was just a regular East Coast liberal who hated Soviet Russia." This simplifies a bit, but is as good an opinion as any.

The actual go-between who talked Clare into running for Congress in 1942—and not just talked, but guided her first steps—was Sam Pryor, a vice president of Pan American Airways. Sam was a Yale man, as was his boss, Juan Trippe, and Luce always hit it off swimmingly with Yale men. *Time*, Inc. correspondents used to fly Pan Am as a matter of course, and the magazine itself gave Trippe one of its more fulsome cover stories, if one can compare those rich outpourings.

It was all quite open and accepted, a routine exchange of services. What was just a little unusual

was Clare's maiden speech in Congress in 1943. Everybody remembers the word "globaloney" from that speech, but Clare still wins bets on what it refers to. Most of her bettors assume that she was attacking Henry Wallace and whatever form of world federation he was plugging that month, and it cost them a dollar each time. What she was attacking was Henry Wallace and *Freedom of the Skies*. The sublime Henry was recommending that after the war everybody be allowed to fly over everything and land on anybody, and Clare pointed out, among other things, that this would cut the throat of our own air industry.

The cream pies flew at once: to propose any kind of postwar air policy was considered unfriendly, if not downright Yankee imperialist. "Smart," said Lady Astor, the Clare Luce of England, "in the way that a very stylish and ridiculous hat is smart." Of course, Clare's speech became the common sense of the next few years. But at the time it was considered strictly a blow for Harry's American Century, and perhaps it was that, too. But more immediately, it was a blow for Sam Pryor and Pan Am.

In her campaigns, her worst moments (like everybody's), she attacked a phantom "Broadway to Browder" axis of New Dealers, which suggests to me not only that she was getting even with her old profession, but that she saw the value of this line of demagoguery before her time. I've since discovered that this same line was very popular with the whole Thomas Dewey campaign *apparat* in 1944, which realized, as HUAC would later, that dragging in showbiz, however irrelevant, sells tickets. So Clare did not initiate this bit of business: she was simply the last person who should have used it. Anyway, in her congressional speeches I found no special whiff of the witch-hunt, though I'll admit to dozing off over those worthy volumes. There was then an unspoken feeling among many liberals that everything in poor countries that was not communist was probably moribund. Clare argued, contrariwise, that this might not apply to the evolved nations of Eastern Europe. Clare's case was reasonable, sophisticated, and far from being right-wing rant. No doubt this was just the kind of congresswoman that Luce wanted, but there is no need to look for his hand back there: her foreign policy was consistent with everything she had ever written, down to the most frivolous plays. The spunky little guy, with whom she so oddly identifies, must be encouraged to fight the latest bully. If one reason must be adduced for her political career, this is probably it.

But this was not the kind of show that people wanted, and they deplored it from Clare. They wanted their globaloney, and they wanted a brassy interloper, and that is still what they remember about her. In 1944, Clare played into their hands with her famous "GI Joe and GI Jim speech," keynoting the Republican Convention. Joe is the guy who comes back with brass bands, Jim is the one



Clare Boothe Luce and Sam Pryor, vice president of Pan American Airways, at the time of her election to Congress in 1942. They are waving their hands enthusiastically.

who doesn't. Jim died for our political sins, and lies in an unmarked grave.

In wartime this was incendiary stuff. To blame the politicians for our boys' deaths was considered tasteless beyond discussion. Since it seemed so likely to be true, it could only hurt the war effort, which was the ultimate sin of the moment. And the melodramatic device of the name Jim seemed an example of misplaced cleverness: it jerked tears in a way that made you want to jerk them back immediately. The effect was that she was nearly defeated in her 1944 campaign for reelection, as various Celebrities for Roosevelt, such as Dorothy Parker and Clifton Fadiman, swarmed into Connecticut and stumped her district denouncing her. Edna Ferber, her fellow playwright, was particularly vituperative, as if it took a playwright to denounce a playwright. (Clare says that she made it up with Ms. Ferber years later under a hair dryer. According to Clare, she made it up with just about everybody after she became a Catholic.)

Attacking Roosevelt was a losing proposition that year, and Clare only made it worse by finally saying outright what she really wanted to say, i.e., that FDR was a dying man. "If there'd been any doubt about it, I wouldn't have said it," she says. But the now famous conspiracy of silence was too much for her. Roosevelt's health was practically an article of patriotic faith, like the valor of our boys and the rightness of our cause, and to question it was gross, subversive, and repulsive. What was one to do?

CLARE HAD STUMBLED or marched into the role expected of her: that of Republican hatchet, or Nixon, which means taking on a prepackaged list of enemies. (And who better than a bitchy woman for this work?) And once you're on that, you might as well keep on attacking. One difference between her and Nixon, which may or may not recommend her to one, is that she seemed to be having fun doing it. She was still comparatively new at this inflammatory stuff and she fell on it with glee, laying on the irony and woe like a beginning chef at the spice rack. Roosevelt himself had established an atmosphere of rough and tumble, of political horseplay, and Clare seemed only to be playing him at his own game. They made, in retrospect, a rather beguiling comedy team in a grim period. "Clear it with Sidney" was her tag line for FDR, Sidney Hillman being the leftist Secretary of Labor; but this pleasantry was taken by some to be anti-Semitic—a probable case of Harry's sins being visited on her.

Politics, it goes without saying, was an extension of theater to Clare, and as usual there are not too many parts open to women. Her choice of Witty Hit Woman was the most entertaining she could have chosen—as opposed to, say, Margaret Chase Smith's

Rock of Integrity. Unfortunately, glibbing at Roosevelt brought her not only enemies but friends: in this case, a jeering rancorous gallery, along with a few sensibiles, which attached itself to Clare in the Forties and has never really let go. They are a dismally easy crowd to play to, roaring at everything halfway nasty, whatever its quality. But an audience is an audience and a trouper must work.

But two other things were happening to her, during those years on the Hill, which were pulling her away from her new Dragon Lady role. One was that she was developing a slight contempt for politics as such—arrived at backward from the discovery that politicians themselves were so second-rate; the other was that while her reputation for nastiness still grew wild as a weed, she was consciously trying to be nicer. She had once announced that her natural rival, the journalist Dorothy Thompson, was "the only woman who ever conducted her menopause in public," and it had blown instantly into such a dream feud that press agents could have kept it going forever. Both women did their bit to fan it before they saw what was happening. Alert too late to the public taste for hair-pulling women, Clare determined to patch it up with Thompson and all future Thompsons. She made a mutual nonaggression pact with the formidable Dorothy, which did not prevent the gag-writing community from distributing fresh insults between the two ladies periodically. Even when Thompson took out a paid ad for Clare in her 1942 campaign, people thought it was a trick.

Clare made similar pacts with her fellow congresswomen: not only to avoid downright insult, but not to comment on each other's speeches at all. It may reasonably be assumed that nobody noticed



Incidentally, Mrs. Clare—the beauty, the diamond-studded, aristocratic, from Connecticut, gives out with some words during a great conference in Chicago prior to going about her convention duties. Noted for her delicious taste in hats, this photo of the beautiful Clare, sans top place, may be considered a rarity.

the sudden sweetness. Clare's reputation as a firebrand burned on its own juice by now. But when you think about it, it is quite a sacrifice, if you're good at it and people expect it anyway, to pass up a cruel wisecrack on principle.

In January 1944 Clare's only child, Ann, died in a freak car accident, being bounced out of the passenger seat against a tree while driving with a sorority sister from Stanford—an accident in which everything had to go wrong for death to occur—and a few years later, Clare was to write a scorching account of just how much this hurt. It is generally believed that she quit politics almost immediately after the tragedy: but she didn't, she ran again in her most pugnacious vein. It wasn't just the death of Ann that slowed her down in the end, but a series of personal blows that she could hide for only so long, like a game prizefighter—the death of her mother, the cooling of Harry, and several suicides of friends. Anyway, she quit Washington at the end of 1946, walking with steady steps out of her cherished limelight. The dreaded Luce takeover had not occurred. She had not played Evita. Perhaps it had never entered her mind.

It had been an amazing span of years from 1929, when she walked away from Brokaw, to 1946, when she walked away from public life. Editor, playwright, newshen (as they were then called), author, congresswoman, fashion plate—it's hard to think what more she could have done without seeming ostentatious.

I thought of Clare when I first heard the Cole Porter song "Why Don't We Try Staying Home?" ("we've done everything else twice"). And staying home is where I found her in 1949, when, as a teenager, I spent a dreamlike summer at the Luce home in Connecticut.

The View from the Bunkhouse: 1949–

SHE HAD ALREADY fallen off her horse and seen the light of Christianity, so I never knew Clare I, the famous pagan. Many people didn't notice the difference, partly because there wasn't a trace of sackcloth about her and partly because she had to go and get converted by Fulton Sheen, official priest to the celebrities. Sheen, I later learned, was a technician: she had originally applied to a simple Polish priest, who passed her on like a hot potato to the brainy monsignor. Still, one is not to suppose a complete change of character. When my father asked how she was making out with Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*, she confessed that "one swallow does not make a summa." But the religious impulse was quite solid and unflashy. After some in-

vigorating jousting with Sheen, she moved on to plainer fare.

Since the only thing she was visibly doing in the early Fifties was being Catholic, the Clareophobes and -ophiles had to make what they could of that. The Bishop Sheen connection was usually good for a laugh (he showed little angels on his TV show, for Pete's sake), but nobody really minded Sheen. He was a decent man in a childish period who'd gone a teensy bit too far. But Cardinal Spellman was something else. Although Clare doesn't even make the index of Robert Gannon's exhaustive biography of Spellman, and he certainly wasn't a houseguest, their glancing friendship had symbolic significance. In those days Spellman was busily building himself up, like a snowman, into a liberal nemesis by such moves as denouncing Eleanor Roosevelt, personally breaking a gravedigger's strike, and later honoring Joe McCarthy at table. Clare's relationship with him was largely pastoral and social, stemming from her marriage situation vis-à-vis the Church, but given their political track records few people believed this, because few people thought of Spellman as a priest at all.

Actually, Spellie, or His Remnants, as we gutter-snipes called His Eminence Francis X. Spellman, was rumored to be an affable fellow in private, who once delivered the endearing line, "Frankly, I prefer the Vargas girl to the Venus de Milo," but he really was quite the bogeyman in public. Besides looking like a cartoon in *Krokodil*, he seemed, all too often, to act like one, running his diocese like the late Mayor Daley's Chicago, with a touch of Cosimo de' Medici thrown in. Spellman was twice cursed, because even his great virtue, his unpretentiousness, was held against him. The plumb ordinariness that seemed so attractive in Chesterton's Father Brown looked like well-fed mediocrity in Spellman because of the company he kept. If he was a bad friend for Clare in some eyes, people like Clare were bad friends for him, the simple priest of the people. Yet what was Spellman to do? He was sitting on a gold mine, the richest diocese in the world, and it was his spiritual duty to turn it to account.

If Spellman was a bad friend, in those same eyes, for Clare in the Forties, he became a worse one later, as his caged combativeness made him virtually the official chaplain of the cold war. By then his whole world was roaring down the drain. His power base was crumbling; those spanking-new churches were half-empty, and his deluxe seminary at Dunwoodie was a ghost town; and any day his teachers were going to start asking for money. But none of this was in sight when Clare Luce first entered his little gold-rush kingdom in the 1940s.

One problem that did come rippling down from the top right away was the general presumption that Mrs. Luce's income and fame bracket had entitled her to go on living with a divorced man with the Church's approval. It is a mark of Spellman's sto-

cal delicacy that he never corrected this misapprehension. In this, he probably did more overall harm than good, reinforcing the impression of a double standard for rich and poor, but his treatment of the matter was piously (i.e., "To hell with public opinion") and it won him Clare's friendship, as stoical silence usually does. If she wanted the truth about herself and Harry to come out, that was her business.

Now that Harry is dead, and the issue has cooled a bit, she presumably doesn't mind the truth coming out: she and Harry had not lived together publicly for some time before the conversion. Harry's anxious conscience made it impossible for him to conduct two affairs at once, so as soon as someone, anyone, else came along, that was that. Whoever came along, I deduce, did so after about five years. If so, it suggests that their professional partnership got stronger as the chemistry got weaker. This physical estrangement was one of the several blows that drove Clare toward Catholicism, a move that Presbyterian Harry, perhaps relieved, encouraged warmly.

Spellman, for all his famous rigidity, was enormously sympathetic, and even favored their staying together so long as the companionship side of their marriage held up and was fruitful to them. This was grounds enough for Clare's friendship—but, unfortunately, it was invisible, and all the public could see was two cold warriors clanking glasses.

ANTICOMMUNISM brought her both friends and more critics. Congresswoman Luce was of course on record as having opposed the iron curtain while it was still going up. But she couldn't have bargained on the raggletag mob of anticommunists who joined her now, all itching to exploit the chip on Catholic and nativist shoulders (the nativists were really sore about things like zoning boards and do-good taxing, but it all came under the heading of *communism* to them).

Both Clare and Harry felt that isolationism would stunt America's growth and choke off its manifest destiny, which Harry had made his own, and they were willing to do whatever amount of saber-rattling would prevent this. But for them it had to be good clean saber-rattling, not the back-alley switchblade stuff McCarthy went in for. Unfortunately, since most Americans can see only two of everything, us and them, left and right, all the anticommunists found themselves herded into the same tent, like so many liberals. It was in vain for *Time* to attack Joe McCarthy as a vulgarian; Spellman gave Joe a memorial dinner, to bolster his own constituency; Fulton Sheen and Spellman went to Australia together to review the Pax Americana, as a sort of benign Cohn and Schine, and Clare was Sheen's convert. Around and around went the web, saints and knaves all weaving together.

She wrote a play in 1951 about St. Maria Goretti, the little Italian girl who died defending her honor, and it got as far as Boston, starring Margaret O'Brien (!) and Eddie Dowling. Clare was strongly moved by the subject, though in one of her chronic oblique moments, she said, "I guess at twelve I would have said 'no' too." She should have trusted that mood, she worked better in it (my father used to say, "Saint is just another word for an Italian virgin," and he was a theologian), but she wasn't going to go back to her wise-guy phase for anybody. The play got no farther than Boston, but there is no more sincere test of one's faith than to write a flop for it, and she may have felt as if she'd discharged a duty.

Anyway, she emerged from retirement in the 1950s, which signaled that her battle against publicity was either lost or won: at any rate, over. Perhaps she felt she had the upper hand on it now, and could face the light without losing her soul. As Thomas Merton seems also to have discovered, in his last years, it is possible to be a Catholic and a cutup at the same time. Her mid-life retreat had been invaluable, but activity was her essence. You can't force a contemplative vocation beyond a point, and the only question was whether she could activate her contemplation and put it to use: i.e., would she resume the old flash, or would she do something more solid?

From the sidelines, it looked like a bit of both. After trying for the Senate nomination in 1952, and getting soundly whumped, she wisely pulled out of electoral politics. The slow squirreling away of delegates and IOUs and voting blocs was not for her anymore. She got sandbagged at the State Convention because her infighting was rusty. John Lodge, whose support she had reason to count on, threw his light weight elsewhere. Despite an Arrow-collar face and mind if ever I saw one, Lodge was just smart enough for that. Clare rallied with one of her best fight quotes, "I will lay me down and bleed awhile / Then I'll rise and fight with you again" (Dryden), but for once she didn't do it.

Instead, in 1953, she became ambassador to Italy (the first woman, naturally, to hold such an important post), where she attracted no more than the inevitable number of garish headlines for the next four years.

A celebrated ambassador can draw more attention than a diplomat should, but she can also publicize certain national interests better than a faceless functionary. Clare seems to have got this just about right, and she made a noise only about the few things that mattered. In fact, she did so well that people began to say it was really Harry pulling the strings: just as it was George S. Kaufman who wrote *The Women*, and somebody else who edited *Vanity Fair*.

As far as politics proper was concerned, Clare's Italian image was neutral if not benign. Just as her

boss Eisenhower seemed to have no ideology whatever, not even the makings of an ideology, so Clare in the Fifties seemed to be somewhere in the middle of the consensus—if one bears in mind that the center was now on the right. Our bipartisan foreign policy, the end product of the McCarthy adventure, had herded everyone into this small area, and for once Clare's opinions were lost in the crowd. In Italy, any ambassador would have backed the Christian Democrats, and done what he could for Italian claims to Trieste: according to Eisenhower's own memoirs, Clare simply did both (especially Trieste) better than most.

UNFORTUNATELY, the lead-poisoning episode did much to undo this. I was quite willing to believe that something bad had indeed come down from the embassy ceiling and even that someone might have been out to get her. But I wished it had happened to somebody else, because her long-dormant record for self-dramatization came rushing back. In the Fifties, we were not in the habit of assassinations, and skepticism levels were high. Why, we had never even heard of lead poisoning in Harlem. As I recall, there were news pictures of a ceiling and a sofa, proving I'm not sure what, and newspaper stories presumably written by men who

believed that women, especially Clare, are subject to hot flashes. Public women are well advised to be meticulously prosaic for this reason, a requirement that Clare hasn't always met.

To round out the story, I recently asked her to describe the incident herself. She says that she did try to contain the arsenic report: that she told Eisenhower about it privately with a view to resigning quietly, and that Ike's press secretary, Jim Hagerty, stuffed it into his next news briefing, and the deed was done. She did not claim that anybody was trying to poison her, only that her behavior was being oddly affected by something—which is borne out by several witnesses who claim that she seemed drunk or on drugs on various social occasions.

Richard Helms, the former head of the CIA, has since verified that there was indeed arsenic on the ceiling, as there was on many old Italian ceilings which substance had for centuries given rise to the myth of the deadly Roman night air. The stuff was loosened over Clare's study by the bangings of a laundromat upstairs, and since she was sleeping on the sofa, there was no canopy to intercept it. She says it would take a good hundred years for this level of arsenic to kill you, but it makes you woozy in no time.

Since she and Harry had long since been dubbed "Arsenic and old Luce," the poison on the ceiling provided, so to speak, the icing on the cake. Weirdly enough, it is both the kind of overnate story she likes to invent, and the kind people like to believe about her. Arsenic falling on arsenic was just what the legend called for. Her years of silence were forgotten, her good behavior undone. Clare had been carrying on like that for years, everyone knew that. Her image was etched in bronze, and she could only confirm, not alter it, like an ex-con trying to go straight.

She confirmed it in spades in the famous Wayne Morse episode. Again, we'll stick to the view from the bunkhouse. "I see your friend is at it again." Yes indeed. With Clare's Roman stint behind her, Ike had proposed her for ambassador to Brazil in 1957.

Morse's opposition to Clare's appointment was I take it, basically serious. The Luces represented East Coast Republicanism, whose least eloquent spokesman was then Nelson Rockefeller, who was later on in the Eisenhower doldrums pelted with fruit when he toured Latin America, an indication of what might have happened to Clare (although Nelson invited fruit-throwing to a perhaps unusual degree). But liberal foreign-policy positions had to go in disguise in those days, so Morse dug up those old visits Clare had paid to a psychiatrist in the Twenties—just the thing to inflame conservative sentiment in 1957. And Clare responded in kind.

She said in, I take it, her nerve-rackingly sweetest tones that she'd heard that the senator from Oregon had once been kicked in the head by a



When a lead-poisoning episode in Clare's embassy, but it is unclear whether the victim is a lady. There is a man in the background, possibly a doctor, and a woman, possibly a nurse, standing near the entrance. The scene is set in a room with large, ornate arches.

horse. Pandemonium. Outside of the fact that being kicked by a horse was far more American than seeing a shrink, nobody expected anything else from Morse anyway—it only enriched the legend; but for Clare to wisecrack about it—well, that was Senate confirmation with a vengeance. Bitchy, brittle, everything they'd always suspected. Harry was furious with her, but she says she'd do that one over again with pleasure. In fact, she told intimates that the horse had caught Morse on the right side of the head, and he'd been thinking left ever since; just the soothing words that were needed. At that, the Senate might still have voted her through, but by now the Brazilians were aroused. Morse's task was complete. All he needed was a fuss, any fuss, and Clare had provided it. She withdrew of her own accord, and left the Big Top for good, or so it seemed.

There really was nothing left to prove, except how many things she could do in a lifetime. Although her second tour of the limelight had been much more graceful than her first, she had become such an automatic target that she still couldn't do anything right, as far as her critics were concerned. And her admirers were satisfied with what they had. She was not quitting under fire—if there'd been any hint of that, she'd have stuck around for the hell of it. She was still in her prime, but being famous for the sake of being famous had clearly begun to pall. There were still plenty of famous things to do, but nothing that would add anything. So she decided once more to explore the mysteries of the private life—only a little less exclusively religiously this time. The Church was home now, and there was no need to carry on about it.

S
HE AND HARRY got themselves a place in Arizona, a gesture of isolation in itself, although I always pictured Harry summoning Air Force One to whisk him to work. If dull company was a problem for Clare in New York, one imagined a plague-sized epidemic in Phoenix. But my parents, who saw them periodically out there, reported an unprecedented serenity on Clare's part. She was doing ceramics and painting and a column for *McCall's*: the usual buzz of hobbies. In fact, she worked very hard at her Art, just in case America needed a great painter in a hurry (actually, she doesn't have to excel to enjoy doing something). And she was also at some point taking LSD, which can account for a lot of serenity, if it hits you right.

At that time, LSD was almost unknown, so it is nice to think of the Luces blazing a trail for later hippies to follow. The effects on both were benign, and Harry actually strolled out into the backyard (or back ranch) one night, conducting an invisible symphony orchestra. Another time he claimed to have talked to God on the golf course, and found

that the Old Boy seemed to be on top of things and knew pretty much what He was doing. The old prickly pear had found the right medicine. Clare was equally euphoric, and characteristically tried to pass on the discovery to others, including my mother.

"LSD saved our marriage" would be putting it too strongly, but it may have made it a little mellow. Harry had gone through a somewhat restless, tossing-and-turning mid-life, in the course of which, in 1959, he had made marrying noises in the direction of one Lady Jean Campbell, the granddaughter of Lord Beaverbrook, the British press baron. Clare knew that she herself had few wifely claims on Harry, and has always been very understanding in sexual matters, but she was embarrassed to tears over Harry, who appeared to be making an ass of himself, and tangentially herself. (Harry's other wife, Time, Inc., felt roughly the same way.)

The best name for her feelings is probably simple confusion. Lady Jean was the least likely suspect, a young girl they'd befriended as a favor to the Beaver. She had stayed with both of them in the Bahamas a couple of years before, practically a ward of the family, and by the Luces' standards a bit of a toper. Clare had never guessed (and she guessed many things) that anything like this was even possible. Her public response was a superb example of grace under pressure (which is actually the definition of wit, not courage at all). She said,



Reverend as U.S. Ambassador to Italy, Mrs. Lucrezia helped organize the rubble removal work in Constantinople. (Left) in 1959, while ambassador, she made many personal visits to Italian disaster areas as part of her efforts to strengthen relations between the two countries. Mrs. Lucrezia was the first woman to accompany the U.S. as envoy to a large country.

"If Jean marries Henry and I marry Lord Beaverbrook, then I'll be Harry's grandmother."

A playwright's line. *She* stays unruffled, and *he* is caught with his pants down, a foolish old man having a last Highland fling. In reality, though, Clare was plenty ruffled, and she had no desire to humiliate Harry. She told him, have his divorce if he really wanted it, but first they should confront each other: not for a battle of wills precisely (Harry had all the cards), but a last meeting of minds, of souls. One pictures Harry staring, frowning, thinking furiously, finally agreeing to forget it. In the event, Lady Jean had to settle, like so many others, for a piece of Norman Mailer.

The episode sheds some light on Luce. The upstanding fellow who'd allegedly been vamped by Clare, the scheming socialite, in the Thirties, has to be revised a little. Allowing for the prankish demands of the flesh or a possible flare-up of paternalism, we are left with the fact that Lady Jean had a big-bang title, and that Luce-Beaverbrook would have made a formidable international dynasty. If Clare had made such a match for herself, heads and tongues would have wagged sideways and up and down. Because her once scandalous romance with Harry was like unto Héloïse and Abelard compared with this number.

CLARE LUCE's best analogy remains the theater, where the question resolves itself quickly into how many women's parts were available in the great national play. Whatever there were, Clare seemed at times to be trying out for all of them, including the ones where you dress as a boy—but this in itself is a part: the woman who wants everything. So alongside Clare the versatile, we get Clare the opportunist, playing stage mother to her own career and getting the part somehow, even if she has to lock a rival in the bathroom and marry the producer.

The role played sensationally well for years, proving how much we needed it. When I put a note in *The New York Times*, requesting Clare Luce memorabilia, I was startled by the number of letters I got from older people who didn't even know her, commanding me to destroy the bitch, and passing on stale tales of her pushiness and arrogance (the other half told of equally extreme kindness). In my dreams I can still hear the Pope telling her again and again, "But, madam, I too am a Catholic"; others have her ordering limousines to take her across the street or telling important people to mind her sables for her.

Since I have never seen a trace of this horror-film persona in our meetings, I have had to guess how much she made it up herself, and how much of it is a confabulation of wish-think, a public demand for that kind of character. Relaxing between

performances, she gives (like Muhammad Ali) no hint even of what *kind* of act she does—so long as you are alone with her, and no dinner table is in sight. In fact, the *last* act I would have expected from Clare is the one she's famous for. Alone, she does not begin to qualify for her own legend, her own anecdotes.

It seems likely that from prehistory through most of Clare's lifetime, a woman has had less control over the performing contract, less say in her image-building, than a man, if only because of those fewer parts. Like a member of the Royal Family who can only be a Bad Thing or a Good Thing, an Edward or a George, a woman must choose from a small supply of masks. We can always use a Florence Nightingale or two, an old sage, and a great fool—and, of course, an ever-fresh chorus of sluts. But the one absolute necessity is the heartless schemer, the cold climber, who takes different shapes in different periods depending on the terrain.

All this is not based on nothing: the superhuman drive and self-belief that make a career like hers possible can overflow into arrogance and self-satisfaction. And Clare did have one besetting weakness—a lifelong craving to be thought clever—that is guaranteed to undo one occasionally. But it's my belief that *any* woman who had had that career would have had that reputation, or bits of it.

Clare's career is a guidebook to what a woman without inherited means thought she had to do to get ahead in this American century. And there's not a lot of evidence that says she was wrong. If she seemed at times pushy and calculating, the chances are we wouldn't be talking about her at all if she hadn't been. Alice Longworth and Eleanor Roosevelt could embroider received positions; Clare Luce hammered hers out of nothing.

Then, once again, there's Clare's politics. In late years, these have swarmed over her image to the exclusion of everything else. And since they are vociferously right-wing (in foreign policy at least), they divide the public on rather simple-minded grounds and make her somewhat too easy to judge. Neither her friends nor her foes seem to know much about her, except that they feel very strongly about it.

I don't really care where Clare is going politically, perhaps because that side of her has never struck me as particularly important. I am happy to see that jaunty flag still flying, wherever it chooses. Regarding which, I get a most eccentric reassurance about Clare, that perhaps reassures only me, when I chance upon an answer she has given to one of her myriad interviewers. The question might be considered a trick one, being addressed to a pillar of the Church and all that, to wit: "Do you think sex is dirty?" Imagined pause as Clare decides how to dispose of the popinjay.

"I don't know if it's dirty," she draws. "But it certainly is smelly." It took me right back. □

RUSSIAN WINTER

life and politics in a perpetual ice age

by George Feifer

Trees, horses and beards were white with frost. The air itself seemed to split apart under the strain of the cold...

"No, Egor Ivanich, be fair," insisted the Provincial Governor. "Russian winter has its delights. Not long ago, I read that the huge expanse of land and climate, together with the hard struggle for survival, produces many good qualities. Absolutely right!"

"Maybe so, Your Excellency, but life would be better without all that. The bitter weather drove away the French, of course, and there are dozens of delicacies you can freeze. All that's true and the children can skate too: on a full stomach, layered with proper clothes, the cold's amusing. But for a working man—people tramping or begging or making pilgrimages—it's the prime evil and torment. Holy Father, what sorrow, what grief! Men are twice as poor in such cold. Thieves are craftier and robbers fiercer..."

—Anton Chekhov

AHUNDRED writers have said it before and a hundred will say it again, but it is no less true for being a commonplace that the way to an understanding of Russian life lies through the ordeal of a Russian winter. *Russkaya zima*, the great depressant of spirit and waster of animation. It is not a season of the year like other seasons, not merely a longer, darker, crueler span of time than that which annually slows the countries of northern Europe and America. It is a life sentence to hardship that prowls near the center of the Russian consciousness, whatever the time of year. As a prime cause and a symbol of Russia's fate, it molds a state of mind, an attitude toward life.

"Summer is one thing," goes the old village saying, "winter is the plague." Other peasants used to mutter that winter had a belly on him like a priest, who "brought forth nothing from the land," but settled himself at their tumble-down tables and expected to eat his fill. The

Since George Feifer's first contribution on Russia for Harper's, in 1959, he has written many articles and seven books about the country.



voracious feeder arrives early, stays late, and exhausts mind, body, and nerves. "Greedy, exhausting winter," sighs Wright Miller, Britain's pluckiest philosopher of the Russian character, "plants himself across Russia as the great master and consumer," eating away hard-won stores of food and fuel, burning away energy, patience, imagination, and the very breath of the people who must endure it. The guest is personified, wholly heedless of what he does to his groaning host.

THE SECTION of Moscow where I lived as a student in the early Sixties was trumpeted as a showplace of postwar Soviet reconstruction, but the freezes ravaged new cement structures as relentlessly as any Volga cabin. Bricks plopped into nets hastily hung to protect pedestrians. Joints severed, sidewalks crumbled into the snow. A fortune was spent mending the ubiquitous cracking, flaking, and cleaving, and much patchwork was abandoned midway as repair brigades were summoned to more urgent emergencies. Even the new Palace of Pioneers of a thousand magazine features had begun to succumb in its first year of operation, chipping apart before it was fully fitted out.

As in every public building in the land, one must wait on line to remove one's coat, hat, scarf, gloves, and overshoes when entering the Pioneers Palace and hand them to the overworked cloakroom attendant. The morning line at the Lenin Library, as every foreign student discovers, can consume hours. One must wait patiently for the listless attendant to hang one's things and hand one the tag that identifies them. On the way out, the tiresome procedure must be repeated in reverse. Millions of man-hours are taken in this way from an economy already disadvantaged by a dozen political and personal factors—and too many complaints.

The list of such demands is as long as the season. (What Russian woman goes to the theater without a plastic bag for her "good" shoes? Even the sprinkling of elegant women make this concession to reality, for few are silly enough to engage city streets in less than a flimsy outdoor boot. If you are outside for more than five minutes during the coldest three months, it is no use trying to keep up with *Alex* fashion.) Yet these are the least of the tribulations winter exacts. Buildings must be made warm enough for human habitation as a matter of course, but the special techniques for building in the permafrost that lies beneath more than half Russia's territory impose a kind of "cold tax" of 25 percent or more in

additional space, resources, and labor. The permafrost in the Lena River basin once reached a depth of 4,920 feet, the greatest in the world.

In the huge land mass north of Moscow where hardly a square meter is free of it, the first consideration is not how to construct new buildings but—now as always—how to stay alive. One foreign visitor recently described how he coped, for an hour at a time, in the far north, where a -30° day (-22° F) felt like a warm spell. The traveler dressed in three pairs of long johns over regular undershorts, then pajama pants and outer trousers. Two heavy undershirts, a knitted shirt, a heavy sweater, a fur-lined jacket, and boots over two special pairs of socks were heaved on, and "on my hands, a pair of thin silk gloves, then woolen ones . . . and fur-lined mittens. . . . Lastly, I put on the fur cap and pulled the flaps down over my ears. Shapeless as a barrel, I lumbered off into the outside world. The sudden cold hit me in the face like a fist."

Avoiding all such stress, foreigners who arrive in June, July, and August—as most tourists and businessmen do—also miss the nation's primary angles of vision and frames of reference. During the blissful but fleeting and somehow improbable interval when delicate northern green decorates drab cities and the scourge of ponderous clothing is miraculously lifted from shoulders and moods, Russians are likely to seem "pretty much like us," with no "real" cause for being so different in so many ways. But the leafy days of warmth and freedom are numbered like secret documents. Impatient winter is rarely made to wait long. In Moscow, snow is rare in August but not unknown. "The nights waxed dark and the winter began to draw on," wrote a sixteenth-century explorer, of late August in the Russian north. During the same week four hundred years later, a Western correspondent noticed an agenda of an apartment-house "collective" posted below a decaying Moscow stairway. It featured a pep talk about "Winter Repairs."

Thy neighbor's overcoat

THE FIRST lasting frosts, however, appear in late September. In happy years, a week or two of Indian summer ("old woman's summer" in Russian) has intervened—more fragile, more prized, when it appears, than summer itself. The turned leaves hold on in a gesture of defiance, weaving a thin veil of reds and yellows against slender white branches of birches. As usual, Pushkin captures every nuance: "Now nature's trem-

ulous pale effect/Suggests a victim richly decked." But the armada of snow-clearing machinery that is being readied in Moscow's municipal garages for the imminent invasion resembles so many battalions of tanks.

In October, cold rains issue from a grim sky during the day and the nasty wet freezes overnight. The several million peasants who daily push and plod through Moscow searching for necessities unavailable in the countryside are already in the quilted jackets that will be buttoned around them for most of their waking hours until spring. Gorky Park's beloved swans are removed from their pond before it freezes, and the paths are ribbons of mud. "Winter's coming," says a pensioner encamped on his bench in an otherwise empty public garden. How does he feel about it? Shrugging stooped shoulders, he offers, "There's nothing to be done about it," Russia's motto of patience, resignation, and submission.

The trees are now entirely bare, and their leaves have been carefully swept from the streets. For seven months, the only foliage, apart from much-loved house plants, will be the dark myrtle of the firs. Moisture streaks and stains the pasty yellow of prerevolutionary houses, while most of the new prefabricated apartment buildings look like cell blocks against the gunmetal sky. Much has been written about the dreariness of Russian cities, but little manages to convey the full extent of their gloom at Halloween. Only the log cabins on back streets and in former thieves' quarters are picturesque, but they are wretched to live in and scheduled for demolition. People are edgy and morose. It is as if the planet has entered some cosmic dismalness. Even the hard times of ice and iron air seem preferable, especially in the villages, whose roads are impassable moats of mud.

By November, the first snows have come and gone (traditionally, it should fall and melt thrice before arriving for good), and few but the political and cultural elite will eat fresh food again until spring, except as a holiday treat. Outside Moscow and Leningrad, the monotony of diet—and the unhealthiness, for this surely helps spread the annual cold and influenza epidemics—is far worse. Meat can be virtually unobtainable, but fresh fruit and vegetables, apart from autumn cabbage and carrots, are invisible. The prima ballerina of Perm, a large industrial center in the Urals, queues until her feet freeze for a few stunted scallions to supply the vitamins she needs on the days of her performances.

Meanwhile the cold advances, sometimes in sharp ambush. The rain has turned icy, and at railroad yards, where even the most padded

worker hurries to the fire as often as he can, goods are handled with winter's sloth and clumsiness. (Engineers tell me, more in despair than disgust, of huge stocks lost and ruined in the snow.) An hour watching the October Revolution parade in Red Square severely pains the extremities of Westerners who have not taken seriously the admonitions of hotel doormen and chambermaids to dress warmly. Well before this, Russians themselves have unpacked their winter gear or, when their tiny rooms are too cramped with furniture and bodies to accommodate the bulk, retrieved it from storage. The overcoats smell of mothballs and of years of wet and dust.

Dark and ponderous, ill cut and ill fitting, the weighty coats are nevertheless more substantial than most Western models. Together with the metro system and the export brands of vodka, they afford a welcome opportunity for conversation with Russians about something they make better than Westerners, and simultaneously provide a clue to Russian survival on earnings seemingly too paltry to support life in this climate. A pound of tomatoes or cucumbers from the peasant market may be prohibitively expensive, but government policy keeps the staples of bread and potatoes relatively cheap. Similarly, such "frills" as a fashionable pair of boots or an imported sweater can cost a secretary more than her monthly wage, but a standard woolen overcoat is cheap by comparison—not much more, in fact, than a pair of black-market Levi's.

An urban Russian's overcoat is a manifest mark of standing, which is why most people try to own a warm *and* imposing one. In one of Gogol's most forceful stories, "The Overcoat," a woeful St. Petersburg clerk who elicits nothing but contempt saves and saves to acquire, at last, a new greatcoat of the kind

"Like horse thieves in the old American West, the notion of a coat stealer shocked everyone."



Marc Riboud/Magnum

worn by civil servants and military officers. The handsome garment quickly transforms the wretched minion's life. Before it is stolen and he catches his literal death of cold, he is received socially by his superiors, fussed over, promoted. A trial I happened on in a Moscow People's Court seemed intended as confirmation of how little has changed in the century and a half since "The Overcoat" appeared. The imported chesterfield of a rich student, the son of a prominent official, had disappeared from his school cloakroom. Treating the matter with the gravity worthy of a bank robbery, the court lectured all present in the stuffy room even more severely than usual. Like horse thieves in the old American West, the notion of a coat stealer shocked everyone. (Telling me their life stories, survivors of war, purges, and labor camps have dwelled on the shattering shock to them when their coats were lost or stolen. It was more appalling, more threatening, than bankruptcy.)

The student's missing chesterfield was an oddity, for most Russian overcoats are supremely conventional, and only a handful of patterns seems to exist for the entire country. When the season for them arrives in October, everyone dons his in the course of a week, as if by decree. After this, it becomes *de rigueur* as the eternal portrait of Lenin in the office. A mere jacket is never worn, and neither is a raincoat with an alpaca lining that makes it more effective than most overcoats. A garment must be *seen* to be warm, accepted as a *proper* overcoat. Wearers of less can expect matronly strangers to wag a finger in their faces. "Young man, your coat is too thin. This is winter. Change it for a proper one immediately." This scolding is only exceeded when one ventures outdoors without a scarf and hat. In my foolhardiness my accosters apparently perceived a challenge to an article of faith, and responded with outrage. Winter must not be trifled with.

Only a handful of teenagers and tough guys make a pretense of being untroubled by the cold. On the mildest days, they strut about *without gloves or hats* outside certain metro stations, where factory- and shopgirls dally in the heated halls, keeping an eye peeled for anyone inclined to step inside to pick them up. In the virtual absence, outside of all but the biggest cities, of pubs, cafés, bars, and other such facilities, these stations have established themselves as meeting places. The young man's exposed head of hair is the rough equivalent of a California motorcycleist's leather, but he is the exception that proves the rule. One of Pushkin's numberless memorable images is that of a naughty boy laughing off his frozen fingers while his mother scolds from her win-

dow. Schoolchildren are required to learn this stanza of *Eugene Onegin* by heart.

And even nonchalant adolescents know the half dozen words for "coat" in common use, each representing a fine distinction of weight, make, and purpose—and together testifying, like the dozen Arabic words for "camel," to the importance of the thing in the national way of life. The warm sensation of luxury produced on the ear by the majestic syllables of *shuba* spreads through the stomach like cognac after a day of cross-country skiing. *Shuba* means "fur coat." "Winter without a *shuba* isn't shaming, just freezing," goes another old saying. But, like much of Russia's best produce, most good pelts are exported; apart from high officials, who have access to a special network of shops closed to the public, and those artists, like concert pianists and ballet dancers, who earn precious foreign currency, no Russian can conceive of acquiring anything but the cheapest kind of fur coat. The luxurious ones worn by foreigners provoke amazement and envy.

MUCH is rightly made of Russian cities "warming into life" by the first heavy snowfall. "For a short while," Wright Miller has noted, "it seems as though one has entered a more benign season instead of a grimmer one, and strangers exchange remarks as though it were spring—'It's here! It has come.'" The snow brightens everything, beckons everyone out of doors with his skis, sled, or snowshoes. But however much this has been looked forward to as an end to the dreary autumn mud, however welcome the first bracing day of white wonderland, one's pleasure in the coming of genuine winter expires when the annual novelty becomes the annual trial and people are "reminded too dumbly of other interminable winters—a formless and inescapable burden like the shawls of old age." By mid-December. Russians are already weary of their cross.

It is now gray: a solid plane of cloud presses remorselessly on earth and shoulders. And cutting: icicles hanging from cornices and rain gutters seem part of some sinister ancient architecture. And still: overwhelming sadness sounds like the wail of a Siberian folksong in the subduing hush of Russia's expanse. Like labor-camp inmates permitted food parcels the population is treated to occasional cherished gifts. A bright day is polished turquoise the sparkling air scrubs your lungs, the sun on the snow's crust makes you smile. Faces flush with bonhomie and with the exalted beauty, while people talk of the good old days

when I was young and we used to have *real* rosts."

The sight of Russian children on such days is enchanting. Bundled from head to foot, recognizable as human forms only by the scarves mottled around their necks, they have the red noses and red cheeks of dolls, the squealing laughter, as they pat their snowmen, of a forgotten, innocent childhood. Visitors lucky enough to witness such a treat leave with as much fond sentiment for winter as for restored churches and caviar. Again they have misapprehended, for such picture-postcard days—of twigs frozen like lace and of the mell of a world of fresh snow spiced by *pirozhi* sold from stalls—are as rare as roses in January or, indeed, as caviar, which ordinary Russians almost never see.

Cold to the utter limit

HAMBURG's annual average of daily sunshine is 3.7 hours, less than any other major European city—except Moscow, which gets less than half of this, and almost nothing in winter. From October through February, the average is fifteen minutes a day—compared, for example, with "foggy" London's two and a half hours. From November through January, it is six minutes daily. "A grey pall hangs far too often over Moscow," writes an Englishman, an admirable understatement. "There is no changeable seaborne weather here..." Winter snow is much more common than winter rain. A fresh dusting of it usually falls every few hours, often pushed into faces by raw winds blowing in from the steppes. "Every illusion you may have had about enduring Russian cold is undone by wind," the underated Englishman continues, "and a five-mile-an-hour breeze has a grip like an iron mask. Twice that speed is already a blizzard..."

In short, the wind and snow are in measures unlike any you have seen. Yet no matter how many roads it closes and roofs it crushes, no matter how much effort is required to prevent such misfortunes, snow is child's play compared with the chief curse and main enemy: cold so severe that birds freeze in flight, as yet another saying has it.

Although literary critics debate the meaning of Dostoevsky's dictum that "Russia is a freak of nature," victims of the country's cold mutter that it is the first and most fundamental circumstance to stumble beyond the normal. During hard snaps the chill is so intense that the continent seems paralyzed. "You punch yourself out of double doors and into

the street and you gasp," Wright Miller remembers. "You narrow your shrinking nostrils to give your lungs a chance to get acclimatized, but you gasp again and you go on gasping. . . . Another moment, surely, and the whole nostril will freeze over: in a panic you warm your nose with your glove, and you go on gasping. Half an hour's walk gives you the exercise of an ordinary afternoon. . . . It is impossible, you think, to bear it all for long. . . ."

The worst day I remember was in the ancient city of Yaroslavl, 150 miles northeast of Moscow. Swift and broad in summer at this point, the Volga River was frozen so solid that giant trucks crossed back and forth like ants over the ice. The greater surprise came from the miracle of how man or machine managed

"A block of pain, the cold crippled as it made rigid, seeming to burn brick and skin white."



Elliott Erwitt/Magnum

George Feifer

RUSSIAN WINTER

to move in the searing hurt. I had never imagined the existence of anything so pitiless. A block of pain, the cold crippled as it made rigid, seeming to burn brick and skin white.

Wrapped up like sick whales in smocks, scarves, and shawls, a few women were trying to sell pitiful knickknacks from outdoor stalls, again recalling Chekhov. "Cold to the utter limit, and drafts blowing into the stall from all sides like into a mousetrap. . . . You go stiff from top to bottom, go into a stupor, turn more malicious than the cold itself. . . . You start begrudging your family their daily bread. . . . The cold makes people mean, starts them slurping vodka."

Russian winter is not simply colder than winter elsewhere in Europe. The difference in degree becomes a difference in kind. In the "amphitheater staring at the North Pole," as geographers have called the country, Yaroslavl—or any other city—is far from the cruelest place. Cities are merely queues and shortages and endless "fixing" to obtain a pair of shoes or a Sunday chicken. Scant light penetrates the deeply recessed double windows, and months of sealed refuge in the sour stuffiness of communal apartments can cause claustrophobia; but there is activity and a measure of recreation for relief. The open country, on the

other hand, is "an icy white desolation" that can swallow poor souls a few hundred meters from a village—while life in the village itself remains its "grim and ancient self." "The winter, what can one do in the country?" Pushkin's playful description of the stupor.

Siberia's cold, the product of a vast anticyclone that controls the atmosphere from October to April, belongs to yet another order. Over a land mass as large as Western Europe and northern America together, machine steel snaps like icicles, truck tires explode, and rivers freeze to a depth of twenty feet. Four thousand miles from Moscow, the coldest inhabited place on earth is here, in a valley in northeastern Yakutia that registered a temperature of -70° (-94°F) in 1959. The mean February temperature in the village of Verkhny Olenok is -50° (-58°F). Milk is sold by the weight of its solid bricks.

Measured in terms of this pain and the reluctance to face it, almost any day between September and April can bring outsiders a fair distance toward understanding why Russia is . . . different. September 9, 1969—a pick at random from one of my own years in Russia—is a tawny autumn day in Paris with an afternoon temperature of 13° (55°F). In Moscow, it is -2° (28°F) and snowing. O



January 20, 1970, the thermometer is at 14° (57°F) in Rome and 3° (37°F) in Reykjavik. Moscow's temperature is a commonplace -17° (1°F). On March 18, 1977, Berlin enjoyed a milder 14° (57°F), while Budapest and Brussels were at 16° (61°F). Moscow warmed up, just below freezing. And when a long cold spell paralyzed northern Europe during the first days of 1979 with an uncharacteristic -5° (23°F) to -10° (14°F), Russians repeated another of their sayings: "That's not winter, it's summer in a winter dress." Throughout this year's uncommonly severe winter in northern Europe, when the new appreciation of energy costs made the cold more menacing than I can remember, people who knew of my Moscow years kept saying, "Now we know what Russians are stuck with." Since they knew nothing of the kind—at the time, Moscow was rigid at -40° (-40°F)—their taste of discomfort only underlined how remote the real thing was to them.

Seen on a page and in a comfortably heated room, these statistics tend even more than most to disguise the phenomenon measured. Just a few hours outdoors on the worst day you can manage this winter will help you imagine the daily demands they imply on every last Russian, and thereby begin to suggest the enormity of their effect on national life and national perceptions. You must also bear in mind, however, that the difference between 5° (a March day in Mallorca) and 5° (the same day in Hamburg) is far less than the disparity between 5° and -5° (the same day in Moscow). Hardship increases geometrically; temperatures drop toward their lower extremes.

YET RUSSIAN winter's power lies in more than temperature. Parts of Scandinavia, Canada, and the United States—especially Alaska—produce winds of equal severity. Outside of Siberia, with its small population of hardy souls, the freezing days of -30° with a brisk wind are new. Unless first-time visitors arrive during one of these daunting spells, they may wonder what the fuss is about. As Christmas approached in my own first winter, the early months of which had been less punishing than expected, I scoffed and crowed to myself. I could take this better than they could.

My bravado soon stuck in my throat. By February, skin flakes, and shoulders ache from supporting the weight of the inescapable overcoat. Beyond this palpable weariness in bone and joint lurks a general fatigue produced by daily shocks and stresses, and by the perma-

nent tension of struggling in vain. Now, when a trip out of doors is unavoidable, you bundle yourself into your fetters of clothing and trudge resentfully through the besieged streets, conscious at each step that this is a land of struggle and hardship. And of procrastination: like so many others, you are less and less willing to take on the dirty ice. You postpone yet again what you'd resolved to accomplish, find yet another reason to stay put in your warm shabby nook, where you ruminate and muse instead of working. In the desolate villages lost somewhere in the mist, millions of collective farmers are not only idling in their huts but have kept to their beds for warmth. "Then I am sitting with one, two, three, four, six, eight, ten, twelve glasses of beer before me," as a privileged, uncommonly honest collective-farm chairman described his winter nights to a foreign friend. "And I am *thinking, thinking, thinking!*"

Announcements of sunset and sunrise claim that the days are getting longer, but the sun has apparently dissolved and the darkness that persists until mid-morning begins its dismal return shortly after lunch. Hardly visible in the afternoon snowfall, the GLORY TO THE SOVIET PEOPLE! sign atop the State Planning Committee building looks like a grim parody, erected to remind the masses of their helplessness against their oppression. Lenin's sister's birthday is celebrated. The radio drones on about the production of bauxite and the 130th anniversary of the publication of *The Communist Manifesto*. Outside, snow-removal machinery deals efficiently with the drifts bordering the roads, while crews of women in black shawls—"bowed and patient witnesses to the incubus of the winter"—deal with last night's new dusting, swinging their witches' besoms in the age-old scything motion. In 1553, Richard Chancellor, whom the English called their "discoverer of Muscovy," noted that these elements made him "very pensive, heavy and sorrowful." The difference between Russian cold and the cold one has known and enjoyed lies in the accumulation of hard days and hostile effects. It is the difference, in short, between hope and immutability.

This is why the metaphoric overcoats are suffered even when unnecessary. Rare as thaws are, every winter has its share of them. The mild spells, if they persist, may rid the cities entirely of snow. Now a topcoat will do, or even a warm jacket; yet on goes the full winter paraphernalia as if by law. Near Lenin Stadium, a group of teenage boys are dripping sweat in their gear, yet none has thought to lighten it. On a morning of 9° (45°F), a People's Court, where pensioners will while away

"In the desolate villages, millions of collective farmers are not only idling in their huts but have kept to their beds for warmth."

another day as spectators, is torrid; but asked why they did not leave their too-large greatcoats at home, the desiccated men cannot quite understand the question. Leave their security at home? Go about "undressed" in February?

Cold-comfort country

WINTER, then, is not only a long, forbidding reality but also a concept of tribulation, a kind of symbol and abstraction. Today's apartment houses, like peasants' huts of old, are heated to the point of suffocation. The maze of ponderous doors at entrances is maintained even with metal-and-glass architecture. Again and again in Russian life, one encounters arrangements not merely for treating winter with the respect it deserves but for protecting against expired threats. "We don't go out at night for fear of the wolves, of which we have great abundance," wrote an English traveler in 1820. "They are driven from the severity of the weather nearer than usual to the abodes of men. When the frost is very great, the poor little birds fall to the ground. . . ." It is as if these fears lingered in the collective subconscious.

Needless to say, a link does exist between winter's ardors and their hold on the imagination. Popular Russian novelists, in the thrillers of their day, often gripped their readers with stories of heroes who survived by dragging themselves one more frozen mile through a death valley of snow and ice. The most terrifying nightmare was that of the blinding blizzard that would suddenly blow up to cut off travelers from the world and condemn them to certain death. "The blizzard was so strong," goes a line from one of Tolstoy's stories, the most celebrated in this genre, "that, bending full forward and gripping my overcoat flaps with both hands, I could hardly force myself onward over the shuddering snow that the wind was carrying away from under my feet, hardly make the few steps that separated me from my sleigh." Even in the cities, such deaths continue. A famous Leningrad ballet-master named Alexei Pissarov could not feel his way home after an evening of drinking. He curled himself up against a fence, where his rigid remains were found the following morning. That week, a Moscow bookkeeper came to the same grisly end, and it doesn't really matter whether the annual talk of student corpses found in the snow after revels is reliable. The very telling of such stories affects one's attitude.

In these ways, the country lives in the ge-

ography and the history of its difficult past. Although some inhabited places are farth north on the map or actually colder, Russia's numbing heritage of isolation and backwardness makes it more frozen. Much of Scandinavia lies above the settled parts of Russia, but its people are intellectually and spiritually thawed by the sea, relieved and enriched by contact with the rest of the world. And, though winters in Ontario can be as hard as in Kalinin Province (Ottawa's and Winnipeg's average January temperatures are lower than Moscow's), Canada, on the whole, was settled when man had sufficiently equipped himself to reduce their terrors. Russia, with its ancient memories and myths, remains psychologically the most northern of nations.

No single factor forms a national character, but winter's dominance is surely Russia's principal influence. Year after year, as I reported about aspects of the country's social and economic life, from the appearance of the private car to the problem of epidemic drunkenness, I felt I was omitting the central one. As a certified "Soviet specialist," I was supposedly qualified to teach Soviet politics and society, yet without sufficient residence in Russia to feel the inhuman weather and feeble human responses, I'd have missed the keys. In a sense, all the academic nuance I'd mastered about the exercise of police and other powers, the channels of absolute authority, took me steadily away from Russian perspectives and priorities as revealed by reactions to the despotism of a sullen February morning. For stifling as it is, deceitful and vengeful at the slightest provocation, the dictatorship is a marginal addition to Russia's older, heavier chains. More depressing than I had imagined from textbooks, the brutalization of political life is also less important because it is subsidiary to climate, geography, and mood, the chief oppressors of everyday existence.

BEFORE its collapse under the strain of the First World War, prerevolutionary Russia was closing the gap between its attitudes and those of the West. Totalitarianism has pushed it back to an older set, more like those that reigned when winter's rule shaped the Russian outlook. Now, as then, there is a tendency to drift into "fancies and musings . . . especially in the long winter nights." Now as then, the average Russian is grateful for small mercies: happy to be spared death by freezing or starving, and now to be granted a standard of living at a ration of freedoms intolerable to most Westerners. Now as then, long periods of austere

Comparison of
average January
temperatures

Alaska	
Alaska	
Athens	16
Athens	48
Atlanta	
Baltimore	12
Barcelona	49
Belfast	40
Belgrade	32
Berlin	30
Buenos Aires	30
Cairo	56
Cairo	69
U.S.S.R.	0
Copenhagen	33
Dawson, Yukon	-20
Detroit	26
Dublin	9
Duluth	9
Fairbanks	-12
Frobisher Bay, North west Territories	-15
Geneva	31
Guayaquil	79
Hamburg	31
Helsinki	
Hong Kong	60
Honolulu	
Houston	
Irkutsk	
Jerusalem	
Johannesburg	
Kansas City	28
Lagos	81
Lenkoran, U.S.S.R.	38
Leningrad	17
Lisbon	51
London	39
Los Angeles	57
Lunar night	-261
Madrid	
Maracaibo	82
Mars	-22
Marseilles	41
Yalta	68

and confinement are punctuated by wild lurches and carousals to shut out dreary, oppressive reality.

The Russians' exceptional ability to suffer cold does not blunt its overall effects. When tired or inspired to endure winter's punishment, they do it better than most. "They are kind of people . . . most patient in extremity cold, above all others," wrote an observer.

Tsar Ivan Vasilievich's sixteenth-century myth. "For when the ground is covered with snow and is grown terrible and hard with the frost, this Russ hangs up his mantle or soldier's coat against that part whence the wind and snow drives and so, making a little fire, sits down with his back towards the weather. . . ." The extraordinary toleration of pain displayed at Stalingrad, in the siege of Leningrad, and in hundreds of unpublishable World War II battles (where troops stayed at their posts until many froze to death) is nothing new in Russian history.

In matters of winter survival, the otherwise backward muzhik far surpassed the world's most efficient army. His traditional felt boot reserved life for hours, while the best Wehrmacht leather doomed legs to amputation; and here German tanks froze solid, oil and all, unless drivers managed to keep some of the tanks moving. It is also true that a handful of "polar bears" swim alongside January ice, and that at the \$10 billion BAM railroad under construction from Siberia's Lake Baikal to the Amur River near the Pacific Ocean, some workers stay on the job at -50° (-60°F). But although most Russians are proud of the nation's feats on empty stomachs, even boast of the salubrious properties of freezing days, a favorite old saying asserts that making a good face when dealt poor cards is not the same as having good luck to start with. These occasional indulgences—mostly to foreigners—are largely an exercise in making the best of unpleasant reality. Apart from this occasional satisfaction at being tested and surviving, Russians indeed regard their weather as bad luck. A Moscow University coed with a fondness for Shakespeare summed up the general outlook. "Are we not human?" she challenged when I asked whether they didn't, after all, become accustomed to their climate. "If you freeze us, do we not shiver?" She might as easily have quoted "Russian bones love warmth," or "Steam won't break bones. Where it's warm, it's also good." All such commonsense expressions can help explain some otherwise puzzling habits and attitudes, of which the most striking is the dichotomy in Russian life that seems almost to split every man's personality.

Winter—a state of mind

AGATHERING of Russian friends is one of civilization's richer pleasures. All the legendary national characteristics of hospitality, candor, and generosity flourish on such occasions, whose informality and intimacy are difficult to convey to someone who hasn't experienced them, or who has experienced the opposite atmosphere on Moscow's straitlaced streets. Above all, what distinguishes Russian social, as opposed to official, relationships is a quality of naturalness and "sincerity," an ambience in which friends, and even recent acquaintances, feel supremely at ease with one another. But these intense delights of warmth and understanding are exchanged in personal relationships, almost always behind the closed doors of rooms and apartments. In streets and shops—not to mention offices and institutions—a kind of jungle wariness and antagonism prevails, seldom relieved by even the most elementary courtesy. From snarls at counters to the traditional contempt for supplicants in government bureaus, public manners are the opposite of private.

These are not two separate sets of people, but one set in what it regards as conflicting circumstances. No doubt the stresses of the Soviet system—whose hollow hurrahs for its supposedly higher ethic breed hypocrisy and cynicism, while its shortages and a callous bureaucracy nurture a tendency to hiss and to grab—are partly responsible for the paradox that the most valuable hours and experiences in socialism's heartland are invariably private. But thanks at least in part to their climate, Russians perceive the outside world in general as hostile, and yet enviable, too. Going deeper, what is usually shrugged off as "bad luck" can also be seen as punishment; like handicapped children, Russians feel they are "not like the others," and tend to blame themselves for the stigma and hardship.

The inclination to exalt pain and suffering to the central place among human experiences is a kindred attempt to come to terms with cruel fate. Alexander Solzhenitsyn's proclamation that Russia has achieved higher spiritual development than the West "through intense suffering" is but the most recent statement from a long line of Russians who have championed this tortuous route to social progress. Perhaps nothing is harder for the human consciousness to accept than suffering without promise of compensation or reward. Unable to explain to themselves why this punishment has been visited on them, Russians are prone to sanctify it into a spiritual gift.

"Unable to explain to themselves why this punishment has been visited on them, Russians are prone to sanctify it into a spiritual gift."

Alma-Ata	41
Miami	73
Alma-Ata	73
Montevideo	73
Moscow	15
Munich	28
Naples	48
Paris	32
Neon (on the Moon)	1
O-to	25
Palma	50
Papeete	11
Paris	25
Peking	25
Phoenix	51
Pluto	-360
Prague	11
Quebec City	11
Rome	1
Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City)	47
St. Louis	80
San Francisco	31
San Juan	48
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan	75
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario	14
Sevastopol	13
Shanghai	38
Stockholm	23
Teheran	72
Tel Aviv	29
Tokyo	36
Venice	56
Vienna	38
Washington, D.C.	38
	36
	-1
	-1
	31

*(Fahrenheit)

Record lows *

Fort Smith, North-
west Territories,
December 26, 1917 -71

Fort Vermilion,
Alberta,
January 11, 1911 -78

Iroquois Falls,
Ontario,
January 23, 1935 -73

Mauna Loa Slope
Observatory,
Hawaii, February
20, 1962 18

Northice Station,
Greenland,
January 9, 1954 -87

Oymyakon, Siberia,
February 6, 1933 -90

Oymyakon, Siberia,
in 1964 (confirma-
tion uncertain) -96

Sa-katchewan,
February 1, 1893 -70

Prospect Creek Camp,
Alaska,
January 23, 1971 -80

Rogers Pass,
Montana,
January 20, 1954 -70

Smith River,
British Columbia,
January 31, 1947 -74

Snag, Yukon,
February 3, 1947 -81

Ust'-Shehugor,
U.S.S.R., date
(1958 or 1959) -97

Vostok, Soviet
Antarctic,
August 24, 1960 -126.9

* (Fahrenheit)

The other side of this coin is heartwarming "Slavic" camaraderie. Like people living under wartime stress, Russians radiate a powerful we're-in-this-pickle-together fellowship. The greater harshness of existence strengthens trust among those who feel it, adds importance and intensity to the "stolen" moments of escape, heightens enjoyment of a luckily procured bag of oranges and of Chekhovian evenings of emotional exchange. This is what is often felt as the fuller "humanity" in Russian life from that of the West, with its firmer control over emotions, greater distance between self-contained individuals, more "rational" approach to comportment and achievement. It helps explain why some foreigners visiting the country for the first time feel that they have "come home" to some ancestral family—one prominent sociologist calls it a "soul collective"—that merges peers in "deep warmth and sympathy." But soothing as it can be to the ubiquitous ache of Russian life, this freer inner life hardly compensates for the political liabilities that accompany it, for all these nothing-really-matters qualities ultimately stem from a conviction that no lasting liberty can be won from the controlling forces. We are doomed, whatever we do.

SEVERAL YEARS ago, an early-autumn sun warmed Europe from Stockholm to Barcelona. Slush and shivering were as remote in time as in mood. Men removed their jackets in outdoor cafés.

During this holiday there, Russia was stiffening under many degrees of frost. Outside my wadded Moscow window, a scattering of furtive figures hunched into the fraying collars of their ankle-length overcoats. Wrapped in the traditional woolen scarves, even women of thirty looked old and stout.

The first snow fell on October 6: an especially malicious start because the last sprinkling had fallen on that year's May Day celebration. Now it was here again, the annual trial of nerves and endurance. On the skeleton of a new building, a pretty bricklayer in ballooned, splattered overalls hardly looked at where she was slapping her half-frozen mortar. The extra effort and waste would multiply as temperatures and spirits plunged, yet remain the least of the burdens.

When will this change? Not soon, according to orthodox Marxism. For Marx declared that environment determines consciousness, and more than anything, it is winter that Russians perceive as the largest force in their lives, the one that most "dims and slows everything down," making them... different.

Grust', the more evocative native term for "sadness" or "melancholy," seems to live in the darkness and slush. Struggle seems ordained and inevitable.

It is predictable that this country, saddled with one of the least enviable environments, talks most about changing consciousness. The "New Soviet Man," blares propaganda as futile as Petrushka's reveries, has developed "an entirely new political and social consciousness growing out of society's socialist foundation. Predictable, too, that this saddest country makes the loudest boasts of universal joy. But the parades of red banners that proclaim HAPPINESS! themselves evince the unhappiness Russians see themselves bound to; especially after so many efforts to make them happy have produced increased suffering and tragedy. The very elements are hostile here. The dream of building a shining new world, free of all darkness and despair, is itself the product of grim conditions and characteristically Russian anguish about them.

"Russia will always be an unhappy country," says one of its most astute analysts. "Even when it ceases to be impoverished, it will still be so." A beloved poet of the pre-Stalin years named Sergei Esenin put this legacy in a single image:


*Thus will Rus forever keep,
With hopaks and hurrahs!
While in its crumbling gutters,
People weep.*

Russian winter is the song of Russian life submit, you lost lambs, to your fate of inextricable hardship. It is not a season like other seasons but a state of mind, an attitude to life. With great sacrifice, the hard-pressed people can build universities, libraries, palaces or congresses with imposing entranceways, but only two of the hundred doors, the least commodious ones at opposite ends, are permitted to open. Otherwise, more cold will blow in.

A sea of bulging black overcoats colliding in a kind of human Brownian motion, the weary public pushes and jostles its way through the maze toward the promise of indoor warmth. As they struggle and squeeze like stockyard cattle past portals that were bolted shut as soon as they were erected, the splendid entrances only mock communism and the other Shining Futures of All Mankind that Russian periodically offer the world in order to assuage their guilt and distract their own attention from obdurate reality. Nothing fundamental will change until the yoke of Russian winter is lifted from this people's outlook, and they surrender the injurious yet comforting belief that they have been wronged.



THE MOMENTS-OF-PAST-HAPPINESS QUILT



This square
is made up of
moments of past happiness
duplicated
throughout the entire quilt
and repeated
in random patterns, no order.
This moments-of-past-happiness quilt
was stitched
by many women, each
in her own bright
kitchen, humming:
different rates of speed. Please
note
the individuality of the
stitching: here
the stitchery is tiny;
some of it
is large and bold.
In parts
the stitches cannot even be seen.
Maybe a certain woman
wasn't happy,
or maybe moments flowed,
one into another, fluidity like sun
so taken for granted we
can't even see her edges.
Over here
the pattern is uneven:
doubt
took hold, uncertainty
and darkness
and a woman faltered.
Moments of perfect happiness
were past

imperfect, could she remember one?
She sat, she didn't get up,
she didn't turn on the lights.
On this blank part
she stitched her name,
too difficult to read—
it's rather like your own. Here,
look at the rainbow center where
the squares converge, the color
of turning prisms. Yet
the center is most
forgettable, somehow.
So many women worked; they blend . . .
Don't look so hard, my friend.
You will ruin it.
See, it is fading,
it is fading
even while you watch.
Fold the quilt
quickly;
put it away in its box.
A moments-of-past-happiness quilt
is too delicate.
It won't wash.
It won't wear.
It won't do to wrap babies in.
You are lucky to have touched it,
even once.
It cannot be sold;
it does not last.
Do not hope
to use it on your bed.

by Kathleen Spivack



THE BRAHMS LULLABY

A Story

by Nicholas von Hoffman

IN FOR a penny, in for a pound. Ellen had decided to make caponata, the delicious but complicated eggplant hors d'oeuvre.

It was her domestic year, her year away from the law office, her year to be a mother, and in the course of it she had found herself assaulting the distaff arts. Her projects had not always worked out well, and seldom on schedule, so she was up later than usual finishing the caponata and putting it in Mason jars.

While the jars sealed themselves in their bubbling water bath, Ellen turned on the TV and learned about the crisis from Ted Koppel on ABC News' "Nightline." His eyes were too close together, an unattractive feature, but his baritone voice was authoritative. The square way he faced into the camera indicated he was a person you could depend on, and he said it was a crisis, a true crisis, and that the world was going on red alert.

He spoke straight out of "the possibility of atomic war," which disturbed Ellen. She was of the opinion that if you don't want something to happen, it is best not to talk about it. Superstition, but if you're living in a half-timbered Tudor cottage in the sylvan outskirts of an exurban village called Groton-on-Hudson, the rubbing of amulets, the knocking on wood, and the performance of certain other private, secret, and personal rituals is your only hope of influencing world affairs. Ergo, Ted Koppel had erred, seriously erred by mentioning the unmentionable. It was bad enough to think the unthinkable, but you can't help doing that from time to time, no matter how often you say to yourself, "What's the use of thinking about it? There's nothing anybody can do."

After tucking her jars and Ted Koppel away, Ellen tiptoed into Bruce Jr.'s bedroom to check on him and then slipped into Bruce Sr.'s bed. Husband and father was so deeply non compos that Ellen forbore to touch him, and drifted off

to dream of Armageddon. The clock on the cover of the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* was whirring and the minute hand was trembling about to tick over to midnight. As the fit bell of infinity tolled, Ellen burst into the locker room of the New York Rangers hockey team, somewhere in Madison Square Garden, and shouted at the boys, "It is fifty-eight seconds before nowhere. Your last chance! Whereupon she stripped and dropped onto the floor slippery with soap and athlete's-foot remedies while the men lined up, much the way they did when they skated into the arena, dropped their pants, and had her, one by one. In her dream, she and Western Civ perished in the smell of liniment and arnica, orgasms exploding in her, the bomb exploding over the Empire State Building.

"Not with a whimper but a bang," Ellen said, waking up holding a bouquet of emotions, fear, lust, guilt, and apprehension for her loved ones. She was, not for the first time, aghast at her subconscious, that it would stoop to a pun about the end of the world. She rolled over, intent on attacking Bruce, but instead of his sparse muscles, there was pillow and cold sheet. Six twenty-five already. He would be well into the final phases of his daily five-mile jog. Not a sound from the baby. How could two such intense parents have such a laid-back baby? Soft eyes and gentle, curved cheeks. Bruce Jr. got in his eleven hours of zees and woke up wet but chuckling.

There was time to ponder the dream. It was the bad girl in her, Ellen thought, the bad girl she'd never been able to expunge or emancipate, but Ellen had resolved her difficulties by marrying a good boy. She could hear her good boy in the kitchen. He was making Tiger's Milk. Why don't those health people call it lion's milk? And Bruce would clean up after himself. He was so good, so considerate, although not one for impulsive flings, she thought as she heard him go into the bathroom and turn on the shower, an activity that drew her out of bed and into the bathroom, where she took off her nightgown, reached through the curtain, and goosed him.

"Ellen!" he shouted.

She was in on him, touching him, pressing up against him. "Lordy, you do have the cutest little buns. It's the jogging. Promise me you'll never stop jogging. I couldn't stand if you were to develop derriere spread. Do you want to hear my dream last night? It was in color. I screwed the New York Rangers, and of 'em."

"Ellen!" Bruce yowled.

"You never get the important parts clear, Bruce," she said, going after him with the

ap as he squirmed away. "It's one of those w gels. You'll love it. Sensual but not reatening."

"I'm going to miss my train, Ellen."

"Bruce, what's the point of having a beautiful body if you don't use it? I did all those orrible exercises to keep my breasts tight ter the baby and do you know how long it's en since we've made love?"

"You don't want to make love. You want screw and I'll miss my train and Judge agruder—do you remember Punctuality agruder?—will throw me out of the court-om. We can make love this evening."

"What if the world ends this afternoon? hat if they drop the bomb?" Ellen asked, at he was already in the bedroom. "You'll sorry," she said softly in the shower and ticed she was crying. She stopped that and ordered if her period was due.

BRUCE JR. was his sweet self that morn- ing. He smiled his dimpiest smile and ate all his breakfast, after which he burbled his practice English. Ted oppel, despite the baritone voice of author- y, had apparently misinformed her last night, so Ellen thought as she cleaned up the then and prepared to indulge in one of her w pastimes, aimlessly reading cookbooks.

Ted Koppel must have been an alarmist, ying to get ratings, Ellen supposed. Other- wise Jane Pauley would not be so cheerfully ipper. She was interviewing a therapist who id invented a major breakthrough for the ndicapped: finger painting for the blind. ach of the primary colors had a different xture. Blue was greasy smooth, yellow was itty like sand, red was sticky, and so on. Jane anted to know how the blind painters mixed eir colors and the therapist said they were ill working on that. The pictures themselves ere, as Jane said, "just as interesting as ghted finger painting."

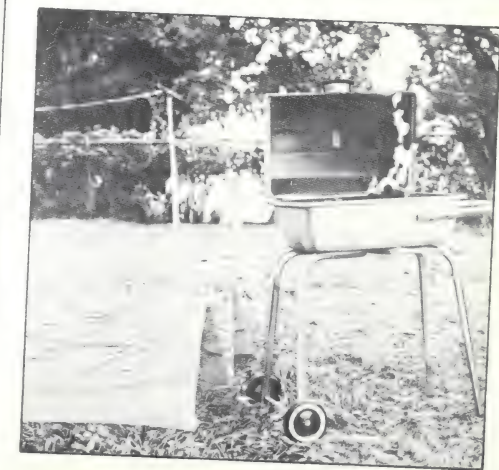
The blonde woman with the contralto voice a the CBS morning news was somber, but ot in a tingly way that might make the ratings o up. She said things that gave Ellen a pre- monitory spasm, made her glance at Bruce Jr., ad rattled her planning for the day. Each ne of these days was mapped out by Ellen ad sucked of every joy and satisfaction, for on she would be taking the train with Bruce r, every morning. Ellen's firm had agreed to eep a place for her for a year. When the aby had come and the year had begun, she'd old Bruce she was going to live that year ifferently from the other years of her life. he was going to live it as though she'd been

to the doctor's and been told she only had a year left of life. Now the year was up and she could look back on it and tell herself that it had been a year of extreme joy in the small joys, a year mostly without theater, with- out commercial stimulations, without current events, knitting uneven rows, discovering you can make catsup out of plums and get lost taking care of a baby.

In the middle of an afternoon consecrated to canning the rest of the caponata, "General Hospital" went off the air in mid-sentence. (Bruce Jr. had been solemnly threatened not to tell anyone that Ellen had started watching soaps.) The picture faded into squiggly lines, and a voice said, "For the next sixty seconds this station will conduct a test of the Emergency Broadcast System." There was a whistling sound for a minute and then, "This has been a test of the Emergency Broadcast System. The test is not over. The test is not over. Please turn your dial indicator to Chan- nel 5."

The other channels on the rotary were also squiggly lines and snowy dots. Channel 5 had a face. It was Diane Sawyer's, the CBS News blonde with the contralto voice. Ellen, without thinking or knowing why, picked up the baby and held him as the TV woman said with grave and delicate diction, "To repeat... the red alert has been extended from the armed ser- vices to include the seacoast states. The concern, the Pentagon has announced, has to do with the possibility of certain persons entering the United States via a seaport. If you are not a resident of a seacoast state, your area is not under an alert. If you are in a seacoast

"He said it was a crisis, a true crisis, and that the world was going on red alert."



© Paintings by Michael Katz

Nicholas von
Hoffman
THE BRAHMS
LULLABY

state, you are asked to turn to this channel every hour or so for a status update. Regular programming is resuming on all other channels."

Ellen put Bruce Jr. back in his high chair and switched to "General Hospital." The program had lost its zest. She dialed Bruce Sr. in the city but a recorded message told her the circuits were busy, so she put the baby in the car and drove twenty miles to an organic health-food store that charged 25 percent more than the other stores and loaded up on what Ellen called Bruce's beta blockers. Of late Bruce had been reading about a substance manufactured by his body, at least, called beta blockers. They were supposed to prevent heart attacks, although Ellen was convinced men like Bruce with cute little fannies were immune to cardiovascular disease.

She would prepare a beta-blocker feast for him when he came home. She would stuff him with every life-giving substance. Block his betas and his alphas and his gammas if he had any of them. On Channel 5, Diane Sawyer was gone, replaced by Edwin Newman, whose tones were fatherly. He had a reassuring manner, although he did put Ohio on red alert. Not good. She turned the box off, bounced the baby, changed his diapers, and put a John Lennon record on the stereo.

On went the TV. It was the late-afternoon period of interlocutors sitting about on U-shaped couches with movie stars with new movies and authors with new books. Black noise. Back to Channel 5, where Edwin Newman had been relieved by John Hart, who was saying that the inclusion of Ohio on the red-alert list was a mistake. It should have been Idaho, and also Hawaii. His voice was all empathy and care. God! They're putting all the lovable ones on so as not to scare us.

ICAN'T handle this," Ellen began to announce to herself, and then changed her mind. "I can too. I am a tigress. I mean I am a tiger. No, damn it, I'm a lioness. Man cats are no good for nothing and I am a mean cat, a female feline defending my young and there is my young. A boy, wouldn't you know? I'm a tigress, I'm a tiger. Hell, I'm a wifey. It's time to pick up Bruce at the station. Well, I said I wanted a year of exactly this."

The amiable baby turned cranky when his father slipped into sight. "I'll drive," Bruce said. "No, you hold Junior," Ellen replied in her testiest tone.

"I've asked you not to call him Junior. It's tacky."

Whenever Ellen was in a no-mood-to—ya fill in the blanks—she called the baby "Junior" and it unfailingly got a rise out of Bruce. "It was tacky to name him Junior," she replied.

"It's the most natural thing in the world for a man to want his son to carry on his name."

"You are the most natural fool in the world, Bruce," she told her husband as he surrendered, got in on the passenger side, and picked up the cranking baby.

When they got home she popped the baby in his high chair and began heating the bottles of baby food in a saucepan of water. Bruce vanished, to reappear in his jogging suit.

"You did that already today. How about feeding the carrier of your name his supper while I go jogging. I have been trapped in this house with the baby and the news reports all day and I'm getting near not being able to handle it."

"Ellen," Bruce whined, "I'm all suited up."

But Ellen was back in control. She could get him to do what she wanted if she played her biochemistry right. "Bruce, I'm feeling very anxious. I think my endorphin levels are much too low. I really need this jog."

Bruce had been reading about endorphins, a substance in the blood that was created, said, by exercise and that gave you "a natural high." As Ellen would readily admit, she didn't know the difference between an endorphin and a beta blocker and she wondered if Bruce did, but when you put something to him that was in his own healthful language, he immediately gave in. He was a good boy.

Ellen ran, thinking about Edwin Newman and John Hart and Diane Sawyer, attending physicians at the death of the world. A good bedside manner, cool but friendly, competent but relaxed. Global Hospital.

Ellen ran some more until her injured spine subsided and her ankles swelled. She would stop, lean her back against a tree, bend over her hands on her knees, and rest, gather herself up, and run some more. The pain of being more acute, masked the pain of the soul, and when she reappeared at the back door, Bruce had put Bruce Jr. to bed and was doing sit-ups in the bedroom. "I love you," Ellen said, to which dear Bruce grumped a affectionate reciprocation.

After showering, she said she had to lie down before fixing dinner, but when Ellen awoke it was after 11. Getting up from the living-room couch, she went into the bedroom where Bruce snoozed in the dark. "I had a beta-blocker feast for you and you went to bed without anything, I'll bet." With which

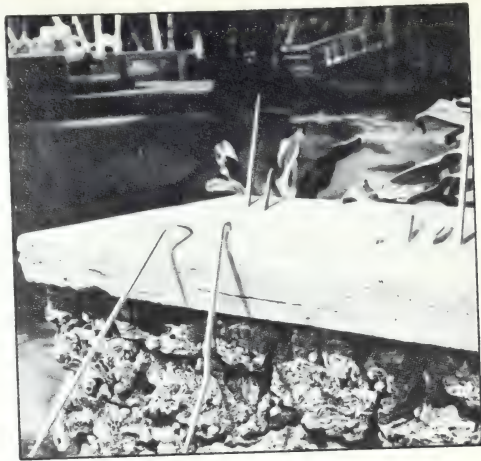
the cat scraped fur against her leg and Ellen, picking up the small house tiger, stroked its head and asked, "Smedley, did he feed you supper?"

Ellen had determined that Ted Koppel and NBC's "Nightline" would not be good for her mental health. She would not watch the pinched, beak-nosed baritone speaker, but Ellen did. She heard him say that it had been determined, it had been ascertained, that it was necessary to make the other side believe we weren't kidding, that if they pushed us, we could push back. To make our determination credible" it had been decided that certain selected urban areas, to be announced tomorrow, would be evacuated. Ellen noticed she had a fist in her mouth and was making a sound that, when she stood back and listened to it, was identical to a squeak. She was squeaking.

The Koppel voice continued to amplify and explain. Ellen got up and walked a lopsided gure eight. Leaders had been summoned. Ellen was fumbling with something on the dining-room table. Bipartisan unity. Ellen was opening kitchen cupboards. Congressional leaders agreed to expedite. Ellen was looking for a bottle of endorphins. The Joint Chiefs of Staff arrived also. Oh, that's right. That's not the stuff that comes in bottles, but they ought to have it in capsule form in case of late-night anxieties. The National Security Council summoned. At a quarter of twelve one can't go jogging to pump up the endorphin supply.

Ellen switched to Channel 5. It was John Hart saying the president would talk tomorrow. Ellen decided her legs hurt too much to make endorphins by running. There must be something in a bottle in the medicine cabinet, to which she went and swallowed some pills that she thought were for sleeping but might have been stale penicillin. They could make you small, she thought, and went to sleep saying, "I want to be small."

Bad Girl Ellen took her spirit down the Hudson and into the Rangers' locker room, only tonight she got there after they had finished the game. The team was sitting on two benches opposite each other, fully clad, even their helmets on, their sticks between their legs, their gaze on the slimy floor. Ellen walked down the row of men, wanting to tousle their hair but prevented by their armor from doing so. She struck her sexiest pose. They didn't look up. "Gang-bang an upper-middle-class, college-educated, professional woman. Socio-economic abasement. Gang-bang a lawyer, you'll never be able to fuck the bar again. Gang-bang, bang, bang."



IT WAS dawn when her dream ended, and Bruce was still next to her, asleep. She crawled over, half on top of him, to schuzzle her face through hair and arms and pillow and beard to find his mouth and kiss it. He made smothered *mmmmmm* sounds as though he'd been fed feathers in his sleep, but she wouldn't let him move away. Ellen kissed Bruce again and murmured into his mouth, "Love. Make love." By dint of a muscle-taxing heave-ho, she rolled the mainly comatose Bruce more or less over onto his back, where she could have at him, kiss his nipples, play with him, arouse him into erection as he came to mumbling what sounded like, "Jeez, not now, honey."

"Now," Ellen whispered, her hands and her mouth all over him but her movements were too frantic. She knew it, and when Bruce rolled away from her and out of bed, saying as he did, "Gotta jog," she rolled over on her stomach, putting her hands on her crotch with a roughness that was anything but erotic. She could have hurt him, Ellen thought. Dear Bruce.

Rolling back onto her back, she saw him suited, doing his stretching exercises, her patient, her fine husband. Ellen started to say something but thought better of it, pulled the covers over her head and said, "Fewer endorphins. More testosterone." Bruce ran out the front door and yet Ellen remained under the covers, bringing her hands up from between her legs to press their palms against her face as a baritone voice, Ted Koppel-like, promised from out of the clouds of her brain:

"Edwin Newman and John Hart and Diane Sawyer, attending physicians at the death of the world."

Nicholas von
Hoffman
THE BRAHMS
LULLABY

your son shall have a fully integrated sexual and emotional life, fully realized and fully achieved.

The amiable baby slept, and Ellen stayed in bed even after Bruce had returned and gone into the shower. He came out of the bath naked and dripping and drooping, Ellen noted. "I want you to stop at one of those marital-aids stores on the way back from the city, Bruce. You need stimulation and not the kind you get from running."

"You'd never go into a place like that, Ellen. You'd be too embarrassed."

"So?" she inquired, wondering if she would have the strength to stay away from the television today. "You're a man. It's not supposed to bother you. Didn't you ever go to a stag smoker?"

"By the time I grew up they didn't have them anymore."

"For your information, Bruce, they still have them, and why should you be embarrassed about going into a marital-aids store—millions of men do. It's a big industry."

"I'm going to miss my ride to the station," he said, bent over and kissed her on the lips with sweet attention, and was gone. Wine, women, and song, for tomorrow we die? There is the stereo, I am the woman, and you can bring the wine, but Ellen told herself that the epigram was thought up by somebody with a clean EKG, low cholesterol, and a billion beta blockers. Harry, I'm telling you as your internist, with a ticker like that you'll live to be a hundred. Wine, women, and song, for tomorrow we don't expect you to die. In his

bedroom the amiable but now sopping babe made a polite whimper.

Ellen got Bruce Jr. up and fed him. She tried to call her mother, but the long-distance lines were still clogged, so she called the woman who was supposed to come in and take care of the baby that afternoon. Ellen wanted to know if she might be able to come over earlier. Ellen was strangling, marooned in the house, but the woman said her family was driving to Beloit, Wisconsin, that morning "and you'd best get out of here, too."

ALL THE channels on the dial displayed the president's face. He seemed sepossessed and said he was "the first president to address the nation from the underground Oval Office somewhere in Appalachia." The male gender is hypnotized by the recording of firsts, Ellen decided, and then she said to herself, "I hate the man."

The man then said there was no cause for alarm. "The best way to avoid an atomic war," he continued, "is to show the other side we're not afraid to fight one, so I am ordering certain steps to be taken to make our determination credible to the Soviet Union." He then discussed freedom in terms that made Ellen think that, like oil, its price had zoomed. Next the president said he knew he could count on Ellen and her fellow countrymen and women. He specifically said "countrymen and women," so that Ellen exhaled air, looked at the gurgling baby, and said, "So now we get equal billing." She leaned over and wiped a small blob of Gerber's pudding off Bruce Jr.'s face, looked at her son, and in her full voice suddenly wailed, "Why am I taking care of this child?"

The baby looked startled and, as the note of Ellen's imprecation died in mother's and child's head, the even timbre of presidential speech reasserted itself in the room. The chief executive was repeating the need to be calm and to follow the instructions of "the wardens, marshals, and other national-emergency officials in your community." Ellen took the stubby spoon away from the infant, who was but occasionally able to transfer some pudding from his dish to his mouth. She cleaned up his face and made as if to go about the business of feeding him with the dispatch of one stoking the coal box of a furnace. The baby, however, commenced a happy, distracted chirping as he looked down over the rim of the high chair at Smedley, the cat, who sat on his haunches, front legs stiff and together, staring back into Bruce Jr.'s eyes, opening and closing his mouth so that a small, rough, red



ngue could lick the tip of his nose.

Taking in the vignette between child and it, Ellen put down the spoon, jumped up from her chair, stood still, then walked over to the wall and rested her forehead against it. When old people, when sick people, suffer a long dying, the world has quit them before they quit the world. Shut in, closed down, sight and taste and sound traded in for helpless pain, they leave what they can't enjoy. Ellen had lived through the bad deaths of close ones, but not dying when you can still jog, when you have the last droplets of milk in your breasts. He opened her blouse and, picking up the child, gave him her nipple, but the baby was already weaned, so that he played with the rosy object rather than sucked it. Yet Ellen, holding the head against her breast, looking down at him once more in that familiar position, Ellen, the mother, tasted the remembrance of giving her child milk and life and love, and she was calmed.

After putting Bruce Jr. into his playpen, Ellen sat down to watch "General Hospital." She knew in a formless way she shouldn't. She ought to be making plans, preparing, at least tending Bruce in the city. She did, but received only a medley of beeps, cheeps, and echoing boings. She hung up with force and turned back to the soap opera in time to read an announcement on the screen requesting her to turn to Channel 5, the Emergency Broadcast System. A voice from the loudspeaker pronounced the same words she was reading. She did what she was told.

There Ellen beheld the archetypal television anchor desk, convex toward the viewers. Affixed to the front of the desk were plaques with the seals of the various branches of the armed forces, and behind it to one side was an American flag. Dominating the center was the Great Seal of the Republic, in front of which was Walter Cronkite. On one side of him sat Eric Sevareid, on the other Howard K. Smith. To see those men, white-haired with wisdom and experience, the familiar guides through the catastrophes of the twentieth century, reassured Ellen. It would be all right.

"I need a mood elevator. How about a drink?" Ellen heard herself say as she found her way to a beer and sat down in front of the tube, absentmindedly giving Bruce Jr. a rubber elephant and picking up a recalcitrant medley to stroke. Walter Cronkite was explaining how it would be carried out. As much as possible, the Emergency Broadcast System, our show of shows, would be structured to repeat previous viewing experience. It would be handled like an election, with the white-haired electronic Nestors doing the big pic-

ture, younger persons at the regional "desks," and the overseas studio operating somewhere in Europe near NATO headquarters. The camera cut to John Chancellor, who occupied an intermediate position in the room, not old enough to be a big-picture person but too distinguished for the youthful regionals that were being held down by people like Tom Brokaw and Ted Koppel. Ellen was glad for Koppel's being there. John Chancellor explained that although this "news-a-thon, if I may be permitted a jocular note in a very grave situation, is naturally unsponsored, we are going to cut away from time to time for commercials. The feeling here is that we in the studio are used to commercials and we think you out there are also. We are a society of eight-minute bites separated by commercials." The commercials, he went on to say, would be either of the public-service kind or old ones advertising merchandise no longer offered for sale. "We might," he said with a deprecatory chuckle, "show an old Edsel commercial."

"I can't deal with this," Ellen said and dropped the cat. Cut back to Walter Cronkite, who began speaking as they do when they say, "We have the first few scattered returns coming in," but instead he said in tones Ellen could not remember not hearing, "Scattered fighting between Warsaw Pact and NATO soldiers has been reported in the Carpathian Mountains. Nothing more is known. Also, a commercial jetliner arriving from Chicago has crashed at New York City's John F. Kennedy Airport. The event is not war-related except that the communications snafus we're experiencing may have had something to do with it."

Where are the Carpathian Mountains? They sounded sinister to Ellen. Fighting in the Carpathian Mountains and no "General Hospital" in Groton-on-Hudson. Why didn't Bruce call? What was he thinking of, going to work today? Walter Cronkite was explaining that the evacuation order of the nation's twenty-five largest cities should not be taken to imply that our government expected them to be bombed. Emptying them was merely a signal that the Russians could not hold them captive to the threat of bombing them. The word "credibility" was being used over and over on the television. When it's war, it's credibility, when it's human relations, it's sincerity, and when it's religion, it's faith, Ellen thought, her mind wandering. She would let her thoughts float, but they were bobbing into a dark slick. Was she being punished, she asked, for being a bad girl? Her dreams, her urges. The New York Rangers, three men, not counting that peculiar night with George.

"Ellen had lived through the bad deaths of close ones, but not dying when you can still jog, when you have the last droplets of milk in your breasts."

"We emphasize," Walter Cronkite was saying in a voice both warm and matter-of-fact, "that the evacuation of New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago, the very biggest cities, is partial . . . limited to lower-income sections where people do not have their own transportation. Others naturally are free to make their own arrangements and go. Our regional desks will list the various towns and rural areas that have been designated host communities for the evacuees. But first I want to ask Eric Sevareid to give us his unique perspective on these events. Eric . . ."

AS THE sage of the airwaves began to talk about Dolly Madison and the evacuation of Washington during the War of 1812, Ellen fled to the telephone. No dial tone now, but then it clicked on so she could try Bruce in the city again. Still, the phone made all the wrong noises, so Ellen dialed the operator to plead and complain that she had been trying for hours to call her husband. "We're sorry, the circuits are overloaded. Please place your call later," the operator said. It was a man's voice, causing Ellen to be pleased, as she always was when she got a male operator, that old distinctions were breaking down. "Like everything else," a voice in her head added.

In the village, people were parking illegally, zigzagging and jay-walking in the erratic fashion of machines with damaged gyroscopes. Strangers were talking to each other and friends were scarcely recognizing friends. A general psychic disorder was apparent to Ellen as she got out of the car and put the baby in what Bruce Sr. called her kangaroo pouch, a canvas sling for transporting infants. Sal, the manager of the village's up-market grocery store, stood by the establishment's glass door, to which a crayoned sign was affixed: CLOSED. Ellen exhaled an expetitive and was turning away, her mind fixed on where she might go, when Sal beckoned to her.

"Oh, thanks, Sal. I only need a few things."

"Only regular customers today an' you better hoard all you can. I don't know when we'll get another delivery. Have you heard?"

"Heard?" Ellen asked. She'd heard everything and nothing the last forty-eight hours.

"The government's busin' in every nigger in New York. We're a host area for the South Bronx, can ya believe it?"

"I can believe it, Sal."

"If your husband doesn't have no gun, ya better get one before they begin shippin' in the animals," Sal instructed Ellen, locking the door and shaking off a would-be customer

through the window. "Nuthin' fancy. Just g one that makes a big hole . . . we're goin' war to protect the right to rape."

Ellen had her shopping cart and smiled at the store manager in his short-sleeved blue shirt, neat with tie and tie tack. Pushing the cart toward the canned goods—they didn't have to be refrigerated—Ellen thought about the several times when she'd called people out with such words. Not today. Around her she noticed women, *Vogue* women turned out in Adolfs suits, sweeping goods off the shelves into cart. Several of them had brought their black maid. It reminded Ellen of Hattie McDaniel in *Gone With the Wind*, and she found herself pushing whatever was left into her cart. A woman rushed by her so fast and carelessly she knocked Ellen back against the shelves and bruised the baby, who began to cry.

"God! Watch where you're going!"

"What's wrong with you—bringing a baby into a place like this," the woman, a silver-haired dowager of grandmotherly mien snapped. "Why did you bring him here?"

Misunderstanding her, Ellen shouted back "Because I didn't believe in abortion." The answer stunned the older woman, cracked her out of her mania so she could focus on Ellen and Bruce Jr., who cried, less for the pain in his leg than for being hurt inconsiderately. No one had ever been mean to him before. "Oh, my dear, my dear," the woman said, "I am sorry, I am truly sorry. Forgive me," she implored. She kissed Bruce Jr. on the top of the head and rushed on.

Batteries, candles, dried milk. Ellen had the presence of mind to think of some important things as she loaded the cart till it could no longer possibly carry another item. It was then that she paused in front of the cat-food section. There was no room, but she took a bag of it anyway, telling herself, "I'm not giving up on anything."

The cash-register stalls were empty. No checkers, no baggers. "It don't matter about the cart. Leave it where your car is," Sal said as Ellen got out her wallet. "So what am I gonna do with money? Pay me next time you see me."

"Thank you. Thanks," Ellen said to him as the press of emotions receded in her enough to wonder at this man, three pens in his shirt pocket protected by a translucent plastic guard, who had forsaken his family—he must have one—to come to the store, which he didn't own, to supervise its looting, to make sure the food went to the steady customers. Ellen wanted to say more to him, but he took the lead: "You go to Peck & Rodney's, the gun store. Get a gun on your way home. Hear?"

"Yes, Sal."

He helped her get her cart out onto the street and shouted after her, "Don't worry about the Russians. Watch out for the jigaboos."

"I will," Ellen heard herself saying as she pushed the cart down the sidewalk, with the baby complaining and threatening to cry. He was catching the emotions around him, dear baby.

At length she got the supplies in the car and the baby in the baby seat and herself behind the steering wheel, on which she dropped her head for a few seconds. As Ellen opened her eyes and looked out of the windshield she saw the drugstore. Giving Bruce Jr. a toy and making sure he was strapped in, she ran across the street to the store, going immediately to the prescription counter, which was manned only by a high-school student.

"Welcome to drug city," he said.

"I need a mood elevator," Ellen said.

"Who doesn't?" young Mr. Wiseass answered. "It's one of those days," he smirked.

"Sleeping pills. Something."

"You can have anything you like, lady, if you have a prescription for it."

"Well, I don't and I need something. I mean, I'm not an abuser. I jog. I keep in very good condition."

"If you want to step back here where they fix these concoctions, that is, where they did when we still had a pharmacist, I'd be happy to see if you do keep yourself in good condition. Then, if you're not an abuser, we can see what's in the bottles still left."

"You mean . . . ?" Ellen didn't know what word to say next.

"This way, please," he said, bowing her through a small swinging counter gate and passing her through to the hidden part of the ruggist's work area. "Blouse first," he said, and Ellen raised her hands to comply. The world-saving orgasmic flash, the life-giving sexual detonation, the positive explosion. Ellen imagined that was what she and this not-too-tractable adolescent, he of the cool, snide manner, could accomplish.

"Oh, never mind," he said, turning away from her. "I couldn't get it on for Bo Derek today." He went over to a small safe. "They keep the best stuff in here and I've stolen the combination . . . I've seen you in here before."

Like older women. I've watched you. Older women have beautiful skin. No zits." He bent over and came up with a largish bottle of tablets. "You were all set to do it, weren't you? Christ, yesterday I couldn't have talked this way to anyone in the world but, oh, the things I could have done to you, lady. Now I can

talk and I can't do anything . . . if you take two or three of these, they'll make ya feel real good . . . you might want to go jogging . . . take one more and you'll feel great an' you'll go to sleep for twelve hours. If you take any more, they'll kill ya." He gave Ellen the bottle and said, "My mom is in the city. Think she'll get back okay? Boy, I'm really talkin' today. Lettin' it all hang out, lettin' it all fall out. Get it?"

"I get it. Thank you."

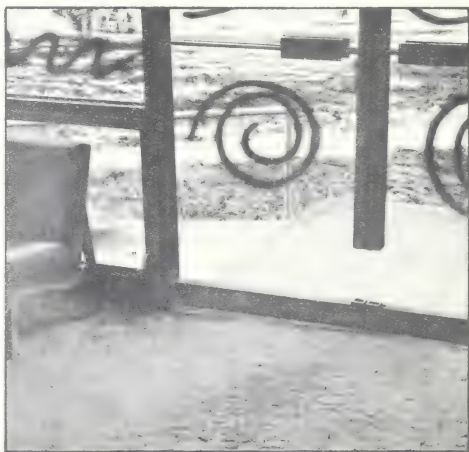
"Well, you better give me some money. I mean in case this isn't the end of the world, they might want to know why I gave all their drugs away."

Ellen took money out of her wallet, and the boy scrupulously put it in the cash register after ringing up NO SALE. "I heard there was going to be a train from the city later. My mom could be on it."

"My husband's in the city too," Ellen told him as she went over to the boy, gave him a hug, and reached up to kiss him quietly on the cheek.

Ellen did stop at Peck & Rodney's, where a man with liver spots on his hands told her he'd fought for his country in two wars and he hadn't done it to see something like this. "This is the weapon for you," he told her. "Point it at the unfriendly and it'll do the rest. Don't look afterwards. Move to the next room. I'm going to give you a box of ammo and this little bottle of cleaning fluid and these instructions as to how you should care for your weapon so as you can depend upon it when you need it."

"Don't worry about the Russians. Watch out for the jigaboos."



She took the gun. She had never handled one before. Oh, it was heavy. Metal, gunmetal, so precisely made. Ellen could see it was a quality instrument, not the way they made so much junk these days. "I hope you don't think I'm prejudiced for wanting this. But so many, you know, inner-city people coming . . . I just thought . . ."

"There're a few of us," the man said, his liver-spotted hands running over the barrel of a truly lethal gun, or weapon, as he would say, "there're a few of us who're going down to Tshimingo, you know, where Route 11 comes up from the city, to turn 'em away. I defended my country twice before, you know."

Ellen offered to pay, but the man refused. "There's a complete breakdown happening. Social collapse. No one's takin' money anymore for their merchandise or nuthin'. We might as well be livin' under communism. You keep your money, lady, and you take care of this little soldier. You grow him up to be a good citizen. Do that for me."

AT HOME, the child and goods were unloaded in the house. Smedley began laying violent cat fists on the door, his demand to be let out. "No!" Ellen rebuked him, "all my men here." Except Bruce, and the phone still could not get through to the city. So she turned on Channel 5, where Howard K. Smith was explaining that NATO forces believed they could stabilize a front on the Elbe River, or, if worst came to worst, on the Weser. A cutaway to a commercial urging viewers to renew the war against cystic fibrosis and another telling women not to be ashamed to report a rape. Ellen had a beer on that one as Walter Cronkite returned, to repeat, as he said, an earlier bulletin about a statement from the Supreme Soviet, reassuring the world that Russia would never cast the first atomic stone. Ellen looked over at the playpen.

The baby was zonked out, sleeping, a tranquil picture of curves and circles. How could straight limbs like arms and straight parts like toes be expressed in so many pink, fleshy spheres? Not just a bad girl, she thought, looking at her child. Channel 5 couldn't be the result of something she had done.

Ellen walked outside. The neighborhood was still quieter than on an ordinary afternoon. Nancy's house, Helen's, not the bark of a dog. She understood. The other women who hadn't fled had gathered their families about them and were waiting too. Ellen walked back in the house to find Channel 5 dark. The electricity was off. The battery radio. "This is the

Emergency Broadcast System, broadcasting 50 and 100 megahertz," and now she heard a voice that identified itself as David Harman, "your Mid-Atlantic States regional communicator." A pause. The repeated message that it was necessary to stay calm and stay put. Yes, there has been an attack, but it's nonatomic, repeat, not atomic, not an atomic attack but an attack by Russian intercontinental ballistic missiles armed with conventional explosives, nonatomic explosives. One of the missiles has damaged—we don't yet know how seriously—three Consolidated Edison nuclear reactors at Indian Point. Some radiation may have escaped so it is prudent to take cover and stay inside until we can tell you more.

My body is endorphin-free, she thought, and then, My God, the phone rang. The receiver was giving off noises that sounded like crackling cellophane, but she could hear Bruce. He was all right. Meet the train tonight at nine-thirty. They were going to run one up from the city. But what about Indian Point? The train would have to go right by Indian Point. He didn't know. He hadn't heard. Meet the train. Meet the train.

It occurred to Ellen she could now go out the door. Bruce had called. She could get out of this damn place and be with somebody. But she couldn't leave. Bruce might call back. Anyway, it was no time to abandon one's home, although it stood to reason Indian Point would delay the evacuation of the inner city. No rapists, and therefore no rapes to be reported to the rape crisis center or the police. Was this the end of sex in America as we knew it . . . her?

Walter Cronkite was talking now, saying that it was ironic that Diablo Canyon, "the object of protests because it was thought to be unsafe in the event of an earthquake, should have been hit by a Russian rocket, but, a good fortune would have it, the Santana, the devil wind blowing from the desert toward the coast, has swept California clear and clean of any unhealthy radiation."

Night had fallen. She had gone to sleep in the kitchen chair listening to the transistor radio. Damn. Now Ellen was wide awake and she'd learned it was easier to face this when you were sleepy. The baby was calling for her in the dark and—yuk!—was he wet. A flash light. Diapers.

Ellen changed Bruce Jr. in the dark and then bethought herself. There has not been a successful copulation in America for two and a half days. Congratulations, Lance Devlin of Laramie, Wyoming, and Clara Apfel, a counter girl at Wendy's in the same community. You are the last two Americans to make it to

her. She shrieked at herself to stop it, stop it dirty, mind-wandering gibberish. Now think. The train may be late. The train is always late, even without the possibility of atom-war, ergo I should bring a bottle of milk for Bruce Jr. and a bottle of Kahlúa for me and the bottle of sleeping pills and the gun in case they are evacuating the inner city. After she had loaded the car and gotten the baby in it, Ellen remembered Smedley. She went back into the house and found him, picked him up, and dumped him in the car. No streetlights and no traffic lights, so be careful going down the hilly roads to where the railroad station sits next to the Hudson, where the high cliffs line the water for miles and miles down to the city.

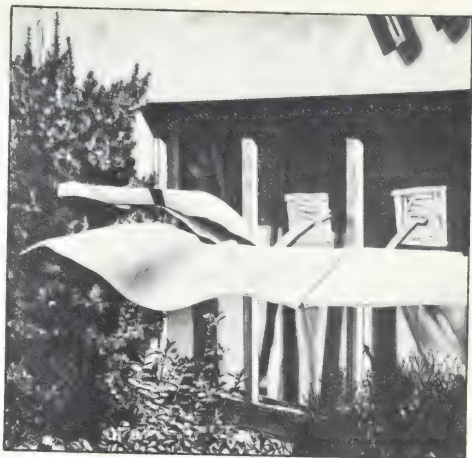
Considering that people had been ordered to take cover, there were a lot of headlights, cars moving in the same direction as she. Ellen almost hit someone in an intersection. Even after the noise of the brakes had ceased in her head, she couldn't collect herself. She pulled over to the side of the road. She was rigid, her arms extended, both hands tight on the steering wheel, when she heard Smedley purring against her ear. Disengaging the cat's claws from her dress, she brought him around so that the woman and the animal were face to face. "Smedley, Smedley, Smedley," Ellen cried, crying as she opened the car door and let the animal out.

As Ellen drove into the station parking lot, she saw it was packed with cars. Oh, my God, her wives waiting for other husbands. The next train for Tuxedo Junction, Larchmont, and her green places, and then in the distant sky eruptive pinkness.

She turned on the car radio, looking for the Emergency Broadcast System. After a long use, there was a woman's voice, recognizable but not recognizable, saying how inferior Russian technology was to ours. The hydrogen bomb meant to detonate at ground zero, the Empire State Building, had missed its target and exploded in the Jersey Meadows. Manhattan still stood.

The women by the side of their cars asked what it would mean for the train. Would the train be late? Would the train run? No one could say. Occasionally a young boy would hit his ear to the rail and swear he could hear the train down the line, coming toward them. The first two times, people stirred and went to the platform; now they waited in clusters, listening to their car radios, waiting for their husbands to come.

The Emergency Broadcast System was optimistic. There was a communiqué from Europe at NATO forces were attacking, forward



units having penetrated into East Germany where several Polish battalions had surrendered. By dawn, Ellen was tipsy on Kahlúa, so she slipped out of the car while the baby slept and walked toward the river, down mossy, rotten stairs to a ferry slip, probably not used since the Fifties, there to look out at the water, look downriver toward the city, toward where Bruce would be coming from.

For a moment it seemed as quiet as it might have been in Indian times, but her ears distinguished the first scent of a different sound, moving on the water, sweet and high and eerie, a gentle shriek. Without undulating, the sound became louder, rising higher and higher from the river that carried it to her on the ferry slip in Groton-on-Hudson, brought it from many miles away.

A crying-out, a lamentation, a rising scream carried along the water, up the river, between the palisades, from the city. "Bruce!" Ellen said aloud. "Bruce!" she shouted, one voice against eight million in the city, with their radiation burns, in their intact city. Manhattan still stands, their tomb.

Ellen turned off the Emergency Broadcast System and fished, although she knew there would be none, for some music on the dial. She closed the car doors. She didn't want to listen to the women puzzling out the keening cry that came up from the river to their ears and she didn't want to tell them. Close the doors. Roll up the windows, look for the milk bottle, the Kahlúa, and the tablets. Take your baby, Ellen, hold him against your breast, sing a lullaby to him, baby dear, sing Brahms. □

HARPER'S
FEBRUARY 1982

THE OXFORD BOOK OF NEGLIGIBLE LITERARY ANECDOTES

A selection

by John Morresy

Nathaniel Hawthorne, the novelist and short-story writer, was walking one afternoon with his friend Franklin Pierce, the president. A dignified-looking couple passed them, strolling in the opposite direction. The woman smiled and the man politely raised his hat.

"Friends of yours, Nat?" the president inquired.

"Never saw them before in my life, Frank,"

Hawthorne replied.

Sidney O. ("O. Henry") Porter and H. H. ("Saki") Munro were dining with the noted artist Lawrence Alma-Tadema and his daughter, the novelist Laurence Alma-Tadema, when Porter ("O. Henry") raised a question about Samuel ("Mark Twain") Clemens's humorous observation on the works of Madame Amandine Aurore Lucie ("George Sand") Dupin, *baronne Dudevant*. No one could recall Clemens's ("Mark Twain's") words.

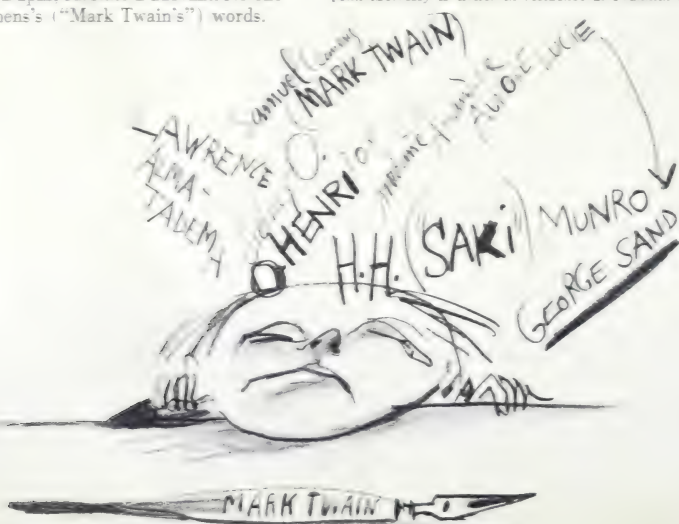
While dining with his daughter on a Sunday late in 1842, James Fenimore Cooper ate seven soft rolls during the soup course. When the roast arrived, he was unable to do more than pick at it.

Marcel Proust was taking tea with friends, and the conversation turned to childhood days. One friend said, "Marcel, do you recall the time you and I and Anatole released all of your father's chickens on the lawn during the baroness's *à la champagne*?"

The other friend, laughing heartily, said, "That was great fun, but what I will never forget is the time we put ipecac into the aperitif when the baron was entertaining the Hussars."

Proust smiled and said, "I had quite forgotten."

John Morresy is writer in residence at Franklin Pierce College.





When John Dryden was writing "Aureng-ebe," he had great difficulty deciding on a last line for the play. He mentioned his problem to Charles II.

"How about 'That's the way it goes'?" the king suggested.

Dryden thought for a moment, then shook his head and said, "No, Your Majesty."

After hearing his friend Walt Whitman recite poem, W. D. O'Connor, greatly moved, said, "Walt, you're a good, gray poet."

"Could you make that 'a great, gray poet'?" Whitman asked.

"No," O'Connor replied.



One day, Charles Brockden Brown was seated on his favorite horse, a white mare named Mustache.

William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge were setting out from Dove Cottage for a long walk among the Grasmere hills. They had gone about a quarter of a mile when they heard a faint cry. Turning, they saw Dorothy Wordsworth standing by the gate, waving and calling to them.

"I think she wants to tell us something," Wordsworth said.

"Maybe we'd better go back," said Coleridge.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was seated in a railway compartment, perusing the agony columns of *The Times*, when a bearded stranger burst in. He gazed wildly at Doyle and the other gentleman in the compartment, cried out in an unfamiliar sibilant tongue, and, producing a pistol, fired three shots out the window at a cow. The stranger then pitched forward on the floor of the compartment, where he lay unmoving.

"What do you make of this business?" asked the other gentleman.

Glancing up from his paper, Doyle asked irritably, "What business?"

Ernest ("Papa") Hemingway and F. Scott ("F. Scott") Fitzgerald met in Porto Folio, where both had come to watch the running of the rich. Hemingway suggested that they stop in a place he knew and have a few drinks. They went to the place, an American-style bar called Manuel's. They had two drinks each, and then they left.



During lunch at the Algonquin, a nervous waiter spilled soup on George S. Kaufman's sleeve.

"That was clumsy of him," Dorothy Parker observed.

"It's all right. I'll take it to the cleaners," Kaufman assured her. □

HARPER'S/FEBRUARY 1982

BOOKS

FROM LOWER BELLOW VIA

Leopold Bloom with a Ph.D.

by Hugh Kenner

A GENRE has long since defined itself, Nobel-certified: the Saul Bellow Novel. This is the Novel as First-Draft Dissertation: a rumination on the sorry state of the world, insufficiently formal for the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago, however well it may translate into Swedish, but not unworthy of that Committee's encouraging noises.

About the sorry state of the world there is nothing to be done save accept it, as every Bellow protagonist must learn for himself the way Job did. And since the Bellow Novel is obdurately protagonist-centered, what the reader gets to do is share his learning process.

In *The Dean's December*,* the Dean—not a Jewish Dean from the

* Harper & Row, \$13.95.

Bellow Repertory Company, not bottom an *echt* dean at all but a mean dean of students, moreover a mo- faced French-Irish ex-newspaperman named Albert Corde who has drifted into academe, and don't confuse him with his fox-faced creator—the Dean. If I could just finish this sentence stranded in communist Rumania waiting for his mother-in-law, Vale to die.

His wife, Minna, née Raresh, is an astrophysicist of the Palomar caliber; he cannot understand a thing she does, save that she brings together "a needle from one end of the universe with a thread from the opposite end." Here, Minna being preoccupied with her mother, he gets little solace from her. And it's cold as he speaks no Rumanian: plenty of time to ruminate. Herzog, left in solitude, wrote letters. Corde can simply run on, third-person imperfect.

What he has to ruminate about includes how the college administration reacted to his two-part *Harper* article about Chicago. "Corde let himself go, indignant, cutting reckless." Here he is being reckless.

The cabdriver who picks up and returns all these dialysis patients is an enormous black woman in red jersey trousers. Her feet seem quite small. Her shoes have high heels. Her straightened hair hangs to her shoulders. She wears a cabby's cap and a quilted jacket. . . . These passenger-patients are her charges, her friends. She wheels forward the television set. The sick woman asks for Channel Two, and sighs and settles back and passes out.

Hugh Kenner teaches at Johns Hopkins University.



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You have to suspend belief to imagine *Esquire*, let alone *Harper's*, blissing to the extent of two long installments these meanderings of an gone of Saul Bellow's, and sus- id it further to imagine a late twentieth-century urban American versity being flustered by their ignorant high-mindedness.

AS the creator of Augie March mislaid his street smarts? Augie wouldn't have asked us to credit "a od of mail," no less, inundating *Harper's*, or the notion that at a rldly Chicago college the sight of e of its deans taking everybody "makes them "jittery," "upset." o, by the way, is he taking on in t dialysis vignette? The taxi ver? The patients? Channel Two, ybe? No, just death. "These are ad men and women. The metallic wastes obviously affect their uns." It's the *irremediable* that is to a Bellow character.

Note that phrase, though, "a flood mail." Saul Bellow's mind has en grooved by recurring images, d thirteen years ago—the very ar Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon—Bellow imagined a more sarnic flood.

In *Mr. Sammler's Planet* his Corde those days, Mr. Sammler, was guing to the extent of twenty pages th a Hindu biophysicist named Lal out whether man ought to be fool- g with other worlds at all, seeing s mess on this one. The discussion is not trenchant even in 1969, and ne has not sharpened it, though side that novel it did some useful ores. It helped keep active the ghtly defoliated eloquence from rich the book drew most of its com- nity, and it resumed the larger bate that reverberates from one d of the Bellow shelf to the other: at reasons, if any, can be stated r going on with the human enter- ise, given all the ways God and an appear to collaborate in thwart- g it?

That grand debate is as old as e Book of Job. What the author e the Book of Job couldn't have reseen was Saul Bellow's reverse

perspective, the farcical. The debate between Sammler and Lal was ended like this:

"So I suppose we must jump off, because it is our human fate to do so. If it were a rational matter, then it would be rational to have justice on this planet first. Then, when we had an earth of saints, and our hearts were set upon the moon, we could get in our machines and rise up..."

"But what is this on the floor?" said Shula. All four rose about the table to take a look. Water from the back stairs flowed over the white plastic Pompeian mosaic surface...

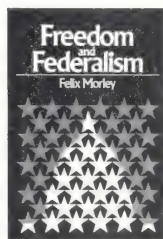
"Is it a bath overflowing?" said Lal.

"Shula, did you turn off the bath?"

"I'm positive I did."

"I believe it is too rapid for bath water," said Lal. "A pipe

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presumably is burst."

So much for technology? No, so much for the human right to goof off on visions of grandeur. The pipe burst thanks to the greed of an elegant bum named Wallace, who was upstairs banging it open on the theory that it was a dummy pipe with money inside. He suspected his father of stashing about the house large wads of money tendered by the Mafia for medical favors.

Sheer farce. Yet since Wallace's father was the unequivocally decent character in *Mr. Sammler's Planet*, and was also at that moment scant hours from death by cerebral aneurysm, these researches into the plumbing were tasteless and nearly impious as well as inept, and the flood that came cascading down the staircase to drown out talk about spacecraft admonished like the waters with which God overwhelmed all earth long ago, out of exasperation with human folly.

That was the once and possibly future Saul Bellow: a sardonic connoisseur of Old Testament motifs, a moralist, a fabulist. His fictions, in reflecting a tribal penchant for arguing, revert to the topics over which God and Job once squared off. To invent a new impersonator of Job is more or less his formula for getting a new book started: someone whose "Why me?" can extend to "Why anyone?"

SIX YEARS ago last May, Mr. Bellow could be watched for an hour as he and astronaut Neil Armstrong accepted academic honors from the oldest university in Ireland. There was much to amuse a prickly ironist, not least the complex fate that had brought a puppeteer whose character called the astronauts "superchimpanzees" to the same platform with the very man whose foot first tested extraplanetary soil. He also heard himself eulogized in some 250 words of Latin, composed by a poker-faced wag. In the cribs they'd been issued at the door spectators could match "*Insanumne genus humanum? Testes plerique*" against Bellow's "Is the race crazy? Plenty of evidence."

There exists no Latin—or French or Swedish for that matter—for the crisp nihilism of "Plenty of evidence": the word "evidence" plucked from law and the sciences and steam-rolled flat to do for street argot. It's quintessential Bellow, accurately chosen, utterly resistant to export. It also recalls, as did the whole Irish occasion, a Bellow who'd have judged *The Dean's December* dreary: a book (for one thing) so remote from reliance on idiom that there's nothing save the regime to impede a Rumanian version.

For along the way Bellow has acquired an alter ego named Herzog, who first surfaced in the 1964 novel of that name and promptly addled his creator's head by lecturing into generous stupor the bestowers of the James L. Dow Award, the International Literature Prize, and the National Book Award. Herzog—a Leopold Bloom with a Ph.D.—prides himself on the cogency of his moral reflections, as, you can tell, does Corde, does Sammler, does . . . oh, come on, as does their author, who promptly signed up the ruminative Herzog as collaborator.

That was unwise, seeing that one meaning of "ruminative" is "characterized by a mind like a cow's stomach." But soon Herzog was being entrusted with the pen for pages on end. Those swatches of *Mr. Sammler's Planet* you may remember skipping were the work of Herzog: the fictional intelligence enjoying time out while something got written that might go into *Partisan Review* (he's changed magazines since).

"Sammler thought that this was what revolutions were really about. In a revolution you took away the privileges of aristocracy and redistributed them. What did equality mean? Did it mean all men were friends and brothers? No, it meant that all belonged to the elite. Killing was an ancient privilege. This was why revolutions plunged into blood."

Solemn as Sherwood Anderson's in *Dark Laughter*, that voice is the voice of Herzog: never mind that the name on the title page is the name of Saul. "Sammler thought." O Lord, "thought." The mind cowers. "A Thought," an acquaintance of

G. K. Chesterton's used to announce, uplifting a large hand; to whom someone once said in exasperation: "Good God, man, you don't call this a thought, do you?" Herzog would have called it a Thought, whatever it was. Corde, alas, thinks too. He is thinking aloud on an intricate encounter:

"Race has no bearing on it. I see Spofford Mitchell and Sally Sathers, two separatenesses, two separate and ignorant intelligences. One is staring at the other with terror, and the man is filled with a staggering passion to break through, in the only way he can conceive of breaking through—a sexual crash into release."

We're to imagine him saying this to someone. Moreover, since what Spofford Mitchell did to Sally Sather was lock her in the trunk of his car, rape her repeatedly, and finally shoot her in the head, there may be those among us who will reject platitudes from Communications 1A; we even opt for Jeremiah's summation (17:9), that the heart of man "is deceitful, and desperately wicked. Such readers may be thought of as unqualified for later Bellow, where much of the time the thread of the protagonists' lucubrations is the same thing as the plot itself.

NOT that *The Dean's December* lacks all touch of a skilled a fabulist as you might want. Its opening rich with possibility.

"Corde, who led the life of a executive in America—wasn't a college dean a kind of executive?—found himself six or seven thousand miles from his base, in Bucharest, in winter, shut up in an old-fashioned apartment."

In the bundle of worries he spends long hours unpacking, Chicago dominates, a place of terminal craziness, its rich without point, its poor without hope, its ongoings rife with jagged violence and sexual hysteria, its very jails full of rats and sodomizings and stabbings. There fate assigns each denizen his place in one or the other of two anarchies: the

itimate, the illegitimate. No meditation of Chicago seems thinkable. Is there life after Chicago? If so, what is the life? The most honest seems to be to emblemize it. But the low's Bucharest is neither a Lower Bavia of ludicrous privations nor an Deighton playground for adventurous free-world spirits. It's a stable limbo for Corde's introspection: a bleak, half-lighted city where informers and bureaucrats are lured like the weather, and the steel who can remember other things are furtive in guarding their unfinished ceremonies. No writer has more authority with the feel of a place:

December brown set in at about three in the afternoon. By four it had climbed down the stucco of old walls, the gray of Communist residential blocks; brown darkness took over the pavements... more thickly and isolated the street lamps. These were feebly yellow in the impure melancholy winter effluence. Air-sadness, Corde called this. In the final stage of dusk, a brown sediment seemed to encircle the lamps. Then there was a livid death moment. Night began.

Corde empathizes readily with the air-sadness: with starker phenomena as well. At one baleful session with a Party administrator, he feels himself "the image of the inappropriate American... incapable of learning the lessons of the twentieth century; spured, or scorned, by the forces of history or fate or whatever European might want to call them." This means: he senses that a Rumanian colonel will despise his incomprehension of brute power, which turns to bend regulations merely so at a defected astrophysicist with an American bogus-academic husband may visit a paralytic in intensive care. If you'll notice, Corde is empathizing with what he feels the colonel feels about what he feels the colonel's nonfeeling. With the book only a few hundred words and its exposition still crisp, already we're in that deep.

We swim at such treacherous depths because in this way station for his damned soul Corde has nothing to do but wait: for one more hospital

visit, arranged by bribery; for Valeria to die; for a grim day at the crematorium; for the flight home. Not that when he does have, or will have, things to do (in Chicago) does *doing* any longer seem to signify. In his morass of seeing-all-sides, acts are irrelevant.

So his plight—killing time in limbo—is rather close to the plight of his author, who must fill a book with sheer inaction and has consequently piped in what's been all too fluent for him of late years, the Herzogian vitality to be gotten from opinions.

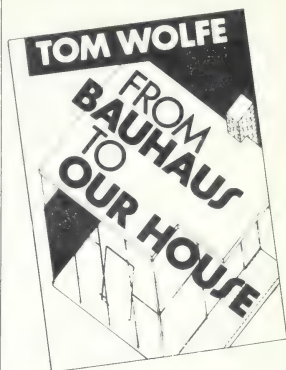
Hence, multipage excerpts from Corde's *Harper's* article (reruminated, even, with trial revisions), chapter-long replays of Chicago conversations, an audience with the American ambassador (on whom "he wanted to try out... some of his notions about the mood of the West"), expostulations with a boyhood friend, now a big-shot syndicated journalist; more, more.

And his drear December has left his creator bereft of occasion for the sort of comic epiphany that can salvage all: scenes like the miniature Noah's Flood in *Mr. Sammler*, or the page near the end of *Henderson the Rain King* (1959) where the hero (you have to believe this) climbs into a roller coaster with a mangy old trained bear, too old to ride a bike anymore.

And while we climbed and swooped and dipped and swerved and rose again higher than the Ferris wheels and fell, we held on to each other. By a common bond of despair we embraced, cheek to cheek... I was pressed into his long-suffering age-worn, tragic and discolored coat as he grunted and cried to me.

That's a high Saul Bellow moment, one of the highest. Devoid of reflections, it prompts them. It would have been understandable to the author of the *Book of Job*, who envisioned Leviathan drawn out of the sea with a kind of Hebrew safety pin, and tethered on a leash for laughing maidens. Impossible to imagine it in Latin. ☐

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DO YOU BELIEVE IN MAGIC?

Robertson Davies's world of wonders

by Frances Taliaferro

The Rebel Angels, by Robertson Davies. 320 pages. Viking Press, \$13.95.

EVEN NOW, members of the literary establishment are engaged in important arguments. They're probably talking eschatology, or epistemology at the very least. Either that, or they're arguing about Proust and the Dialectical Tradition, or Myth and Counter-Myth in Doris Lessing: something heavy.

The common reader tends to more immediate topics, such as whether to wait until *Rabbit Is Rich* gets into paperback. There are also many heated discussions on the subject of order: I mean first of all the order in which writers should be read. The most energetic partisans are the detective-story fanatics, who all seem to have some hierarchy in mind, though seldom the same one. Most are agreed that Agatha Christie is good for beginners; after that each faction suggests a totally different itinerary, and those who believe that the novice should read Rex Stout before Michael Innes look daggers at the champions of Michael Innes before Rex Stout.

Another passionate dispute concerns the order in which one should read a writer's oeuvre. I think I faintly remember that such a conversation took place when I was eight or nine: a friend was horrified that I had read *Scalavagons of Oz* before *Glinda of Oz*. (It was assumed that any decent person had read *The Wizard of Oz* first, no matter what.) Of course there are certain imperatives when one is read-

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ing a series that moves chronologically, though there may be a perverse pleasure in making one's way backward through, say, the twelve volumes of Anthony Powell's *A Dance to the Music of Time*.

The problem becomes more complicated when it is a question of self-contained novels by the same author. Where to begin? Where to end?

Try asking a few Jane Austen fanatics whether to start with *Pride and Prejudice* or *Emma*, and watch the fur fly. One school of thought maintains that a beginner should read the best one first; then he will be addicted forever. The opposing philosophy holds that to begin with the best is to ensure a later disappointment: one should save the sweetest pleasure for the last. And this fierce dispute does not even acknowledge the embattled question of which is "the best." Lovers of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* have hardly a civil word for lovers of *Jude the Obscure*; the votaries of *The Rainbow* look down their noses at the defenders of *Sons and Lovers*. Consensus is impossible.

Sometimes one's first acquaintance with a novelist is so perfectly balanced that one fears to read any further, lest that satisfying equipoise be disturbed. Indeed, there are novelists who have only one splendid book in them. That splendor discovered, perhaps it would be wise to leave it alone and read none of the lesser works, those venial novels that can be forgiven but not cherished. The alternative is to love all the other books, for better or worse, just for the sake of that one. To do so requires uncommon generosity of spirit, or uncommon inertia.

THESE reflections follow some weeks of reading Robertson Davies. His "Deptford Trilogy" is one of the most inimitably readable works of fiction to appear in this century, to those who have not read him a legion. Is it because Davies is a Canadian novelist, and American readers think of Canada as "the quintessence of everything that is emotionally dowdy and unaware" (The phrase is Davies's own.) Sure, Margaret Atwood and Mordecai Richler have helped us discard the old chestnut of xenophobia. Nor is Davies one of those strident nationalists who annoy the neighbors ranting about native culture. The earlier novels are set in Canada, but the Deptford Trilogy ranges from Canada and Mexico to the battlefields of World War I, the Zürich Jung's disciples, and the London of the great actor-managers. Davies's learning draws on Jung, Aquinas and Spengler, the beast legends of northern Europe, the lives of the saints, and the autobiography of the nineteenth-century French illusionist Robert-Houdin—among others. Davies at his best is a European writer, a Common Market of my and literary heirloom.

The Deptford Trilogy traces and retraces the fortunes of three men from their mean provincial beginnings to the ends of their celebrated lives: a powerful industrialist, the world's greatest magician-illusionist, and a scholarly hagiographer. *Fifth Business* (1970) comes first. It works out the proposition that "no act is ever lost—nothing we do is without result," so that a stone-filled snowball thrown in 1908, in that country dusk, finds a most peculiar

ing place decades later. Recognition and discovery recur in this tritonal trilogy, not in the Aristotelian sense but often in Jungian fashion, as "the Comedy Company of Psyche"—the great archetypes—set themselves to the principals. *The Manticore* (1972) is in fact record of a Jungian analysis; the antagonist's terrifying and quite alchemical descent into a prehistoric cave is the analogue of his exploration and spiritual rebirth. *World of Wonders* (1976) may be the best novel ever written about the native worlds of carnival, theater, and film. Its central character, the illusionist Magnus Eisengrim, is the embodiment of the limitless human desire for marvels, the "deep knowledge . . . that the marvellous is indeed an aspect of the real." The magic is at the heart of this trilogy. Wanless's *World of Wonders*, a valid carnival, entrances and bewitches the raw country boy who, after many incarnations, becomes the great Magnus Eisengrim. In other magicians before him—only Robert-Houdin but Merlin, Teiresias, and perhaps even "that fantastic duke of dark corners, G. Jung"—Eisengrim shares the "Magician World View." That outlook, common in the Middle Ages but all but lost to us, assumes "theathomable wonder of the invisible world that [exists] side by side with a hard recognition of the ugliness and cruelty . . . of the tangible world." Thus the Bearded Lady of the sideshow may be the *semblable* sister of St. Uncumber, whose rasculous beard saved her from a pagan marriage. Thus provincial ends may play out the sexual rivalry of Gyges and King Candaules, as we inhabit "the borderland between history and myth," the ordinary and the bizarre, and the putative miracles that must be challenged by the Devil's Advocate are no more strange than the Faustian magic that wishes us in the theater. Davies is an irresistible and disruptive storyteller with a Dickensian flair for the oddity made flesh. The enormous cast of characters includes men who are sympathetic, but most are fools, knaves, egoists, and auto-

crats. Like Dickens, too, Davies is drawn to the world of obsession that lies just over the edge from ordinary life. His long chapters of "normality"—pages that might have been taken from a nineteenth-century novel—offer wonderfully inviting scenes of provincial and theatrical life, of the young hero's education or society's manners. But Davies is most himself when the real becomes the grotesque and the magical, when our shudder of recognition acknowledges the persistence of myth and the power of darkness.

FOR the reader besotted, as I am, by the Deptford Trilogy, *The Rebel Angels* comes as a disappointment. It is not a huge disappointment, for many elements of the earlier works are present in this one. The reader is allowed to toy with the works of Rabelais, the Gnostics, and the alchemist Paracelsus; violin-making; the origin and uses of the bain-marie; gypsy love potions; Thomas Aquinas's embonpoint; and Sheldonian types, according to which the human race may be classified as ectomorphic, mesomorphic, and endomorphic, with Jesus checking in as a cerebrotonic ectomorphic.

The setting of *The Rebel Angels* is a Canadian university, and many of the characters are academics, an eccentric tribe whose kinks and crochets lend themselves to Davies's idiosyncratic plan. There are plenty of richly quirky set pieces, including a splendid academic dinner party at which the dons chirp merrily in character. From a paleopsychologist: "One of my favorite cultural fossils is the garden gnome." From a physiologist: "Civilization rests on two things, the discovery that fermentation produces alcohol, and voluntary ability to inhibit defecation."

The story alternates between two points of view. One belongs to Maria Magdalena Theotoky, a beautiful, learned graduate student, half-gypsy, who studies Rabelais but finds her own motto in Paracelsus: "The striving for wisdom is the second paradise of the world." The other narrator, Simon Darcourt, is a par-

son and Greek scholar who will turn his university jottings into a new *Brief Lives*. These two need not generate their own plot, but can count on the machinations of a renegade monk who comes to disturb the equilibrium of the community by reminding them, most murderously, of the hypocrisy of the intellect.

The Rebel Angels crams a great deal of Davies into a small space. Here are archetypal figures: a great Wizard, a Devil, and Sophia, the female personification of God's wisdom. Here is the "Wild Mind," the near equivalent of the Magian World View. But here, too, Davies is a storyteller becalmed. The quirky and the arcane, interesting in themselves, become theoretical and static. Without the energy of plot, the curiosity remains but the magic is lost.

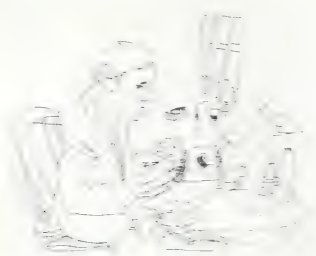
Can a reader sustain such disappointments? I think they are inevitable for those who became accustomed in childhood to the idea of the sequel, which assumes that one Oz book may finish but that another will take its place and the magic will not end. This need for perpetual satisfaction means that one can never be weaned as a reader but will forever suck on country pleasures childishly. Dissatisfaction has its adult uses. Irritation and restlessness lead to foraging far and wide, perhaps lead even to a noble literary hunger.

Here is Humphrey Cobbler of *Tempest Tost* (1952) on the subject of ornamental knowledge:

I like the mind to be a dustbin of scraps of brilliant fabric, odd gems, worthless but fascinating curiosities, tinsel, quaint bits of carving and a reasonable amount of healthy dirt.

The Rebel Angels shows us this magpie, ornamental Davies, rather than the dark magician of the Deptford Trilogy. I prefer the magician, and feel that a reader new to Davies should begin with the Deptford Trilogy and risk a later disenchantment. Other Davies maniacs will disagree, and it may be impossible to decide where to begin. Let no squabble deter you from reading Davies from start to finish. □

HARPER'S/FEBRUARY 1982



VANITY IN REVIEW

The author's vanity as a literary crime

by Paul Fussler

EVEN SINCE THE SEVENTEENTH century, when authors began soliciting customers to buy their books and thus confer money and fame on them, vanity and vainglory have been their constant temptation, neglect and contempt their frequent reward. Thus, as Samuel Johnson says in *The Rambler*,

The overflowing press and the multitude of libraries of books have put a public library. For who can see the wall crowded on every side by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation and accurate inquiry, now scarcely known but by the catalog . . . without considering how many hours have been wasted in vain endeavors, how often imagination has anticipated the praise of future ages, and how many statues have risen to the eye of vanity. . . .

When Johnson came to write *Lives of the Poets*, one of his themes was the frustration and disappointment of authors whose expectations had been dashed by the disdain of the world. The scholar Walter Harte is for Johnson a case in point. In 1739 he published an *Essay on Criticism*. On

History of Gustavus Adolphus. "Poor man!" says Johnson. "He left London the day of . . . publication . . . that he might be out of the way of the great praise he was to receive; and he was ashamed to return when he found how ill his book had succeeded."

When in the early nineteenth century Isaac D'Israeli compiled a series of anecdotes about writers, he titled it *Calamities of Authors*. A few items from his index will indicate the

Deane's second work, the PolyOlbion, ill received, and the author greatly dejected. Hume, his literary life, how mortified with disappointments. Walpole, Horace, his literary mortifications.

Contemporary writers have the calamities, too, and their complaints are legion. Their manuscripts are rejected, sometimes without explanation. If they are awarded a contract when publication day arrives the



Paul Fussler, author of "The Book of the Dead" and "The Book of the Living," will be featured in the New York Press later this year.

lisher swindles them by issuing
any pro forma edition, announced
the very bottom of the spring list.
However, he ostentatiously refrains
from advertising the book, and his
able contempt for what he has un-
lingly published results in no in-
itions for the author to appear on
shows or to sign his book at liter-
fetes.

Imagine what mortification it is
an author to pass through crum-
discount bookstores and see great
of his masterpiece stacked up
the remainder tables, marked
from \$14.95 to \$1.95, and
lying sluggishly even then. He will
worse when he gets home and
finds that his contract specifies that
he gets no royalty on copies sold at
remainder prices. That is the nadir.
We should not be ashamed of our-
selves if we find these misfortunes
entirely comic. After all, no one is
obliged to become an author. Every
author is, in a sense, showing off;
and in the view of the world he has
acted a very easy job. He works at
his own pace and on his own sched-
ule, supervised by no boss and un-
der no obligation to be nice to peo-
ple he doesn't like; he pursues his
endeavor comfortably sitting down in
private while others are carrying
loads or sweating in front of klieg
lights while forgetting their lines, or
arguing in a courtroom or being
spattered with blood at an operating
table or being beaten up every Sun-
day on a football field. The writer
is soft, and his moans must strike
as a more active part of the world as
any. The news that few authors
earn any real money is not likely to
strike the great audience as a very
odd thing.

BUT bad as all this may be, the
truly crushing calamity for
authors, and the one that
gratifies their audience most,
bad reviews. An author's relations
with a publisher are largely out of
his sight, and the relation of his hopes
to actuality is secret; but bad re-
views broadcast news of his inepti-
tude to that very world whose admi-
ration he has labored to extort. As
Virginia Woolf perceived in one of

her journal musings, what an author
is tormented by when confronted
with a bad notice is less the damage
he fears to his sales than the damage
suffered by his social sense. All
these years he's been talking about
his forthcoming book and coming on
as something special to his friends
and acquaintances, and suddenly
someone announces to the whole
country that he's a phony—a slob,
actually, lazy and ignorant, preten-
tious, tasteless, and inept.

*What part [of the author] is
affected by [the reviewer's] bite?
—what is the true nature of the
emotion he causes? That is a
complex question; but perhaps
we can discover something that
will serve as answer by submitting
the author to a simple test. Take
a sensitive author and place be-
fore him a hostile review. Sym-
ptoms of pain and anger rapidly
develop. Next tell him that no-
body save himself will read those
abusive remarks. In five or ten
minutes the pain which, if the
attack had been delivered in pub-
lic, would have lasted a week and
bred bitter rancor, is completely
over. The temperature falls; in-
difference returns. This proves
that the sensitive part is the rep-
utation; what the victim feared
was the effect of abuse upon the
opinion that other people had of
him. He is afraid, too, of the
effect of abuse upon his purse.
But the purse sensibility is in
most cases far less highly devel-
oped than the reputation sensi-
bility. As for the artist's sensibi-
lity—his own opinion of his own
work—that is not touched by
anything good or bad that the
reviewer says about it.*

Some authors are so sensitive in
their reputation part that in their
view a hostile notice implicates not
just the one who writes it but also
the editor who prints it. Kingsley
Martin, editor of the *New Statesman*,
tells of lunching amiably with H. G.
Wells. The same week his journal
had published a savage review of
Wells's latest novel. "On Monday
morning I found a card from H. G.
which began: 'So you really had
that stinker up your sleeve when you
greeted me so warmly last Tuesday,'

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Fact: Diabetes is growing at a rate of 600,000

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Fact: Diabetes has become the third largest

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and ended by saying that I was a cad." Martin's reply:

My dear H. G.,

With your note in front of me it takes some effort to recall that you are not really the vain and abusive little man that its petulance would suggest....

When I saw you...I was friendly because I felt friendly to H. G., whom I have always admired and to whom I owe a great deal of my mental furniture. I knew nothing of your new book....I did not know to whom it had been sent for review or whether a review had been written. It was not in my mind....

But that is not the point. The important question is how you can think that if I had seen the review or known that we were printing an unfavorable review of your book, I would somehow have behaved differently. Do you mean to suggest that because a reviewer had written something unfavorable to you...I should therefore cut you when I met you? Or that I should be in tears or blushing from shame? Or what do you suggest? Or can it be that you imagine that when I saw that an unfavorable notice of your book had reached the paper I ought to have said 'My old friend H. G. Wells will not like this review, and therefore I cannot print this reviewer's honest opinion of his book....' What would you say, supposing you had written a review and then the Editor explained that he could not print your criticism because he was a friend of the author or did not like to hurt his feelings?

Martin grasps entirely the principle about the ethics of authorship enunciated by Johnson over a century and a half earlier: "An author places himself uncalled before the tribunal of criticism, and solicits fame at the hazard of disgrace."

BUT EVEN though in their more lucid moments of moral understanding authors would agree with Johnson, in practice vanity and the affectation of delicate sensibility frequently drive them to intemperate despair over bad reviews. Tennyson, Woolf re-

minds us, at one point was so cast down by reviews of his work that he "actually contemplated emigration." More recently, May Sarton, novelist and poet, has expressed her conviction that an abusive notice of one of her novels in *The New York Times Book Review* caused her to suffer something close to nervous collapse, culminating in a sarcoma of the breast and a mastectomy. "I know that the amount of suppressed rage I have suffered since last fall had to find some way out," Sarton writes in *Recovering: A Journal*, which describes her year-long agony. Sorry as one is for May Sarton's illness and surgery, her book makes an instructive document for the pathologist of literary vanity.

Johnson knew that, looked at correctly—that is, without vanity—there's no such thing as a bad review. Boswell reports: "He remarked that attacks on authors did them much service. 'A man who tells me my play is very bad is less my enemy than he who lets it die in silence. A man whose business it is to be talked of is much helped by being attacked.'" Traveling in Scotland, Johnson heard Sir John Dalrymple complain about some bad reviews of his *Memoirs*. Johnson said: "Nay, sir, do not complain. It is advantageous to an author that his book should be attacked as well as praised. Fame is a shuttlecock. If it be struck at only one end of the room, it will soon fall to the ground. To keep it up, it must be struck at both ends."

Experienced authors know that it's less the tenor than the length of the review that counts. I've winced at a hostile review ("a sad disappointment"; "well-informed fatuity"; "chirpy facetiousness"; "prissy hauteur") and a few hours later met people who've read it and remembered it as highly laudatory. What they're remembering is the size of the review and its position in the format, and they will hasten to buy the book and expect to find great merit in it, recalling that some national periodical took it seriously, that is, gave it a lot of space. Unfavorable observations in reviews tend to be remembered only by authors or reviewers, very seldom by readers.

WHILE abandoning a multitude of former literary genres—like sermon, the theatre prologue in verse, the ethical essay, and the Arthurian narrative poem—our age has formulated few new ones. One generic invention was probably credited with—if the term is the "documentary novel about real-life murderers," Capote's *In Cold Blood* or Mailer's *The Executioner's Song*. Another, the little self-celebratory classified ad in the Personal column of our age, such as the *New York Review of Books*, offering one's body rented for sexual uses. A third mode, the genre also finds its home in the *New York Review of Books*, although also to be seen in the *Times Literary Supplement* and *The New York Times Book Review*, as well as the *British New Statesman* and *Spectator*.

This is what I'd call the A.B.—the Author's Big Mistake—that the letter from an aggrieved writer complaining about a review. He has sent out his book for acclamations. Encountering contempt instead, he has instantly taken pen in hand to right this great wrong. The little lyric Personal ad and the letter from an ill-reviewed author are not as distinct generically as one might imagine at first glance. Each constitutes a little arena of a very twentieth-century sort of insecure egotism and self-concern, and a critic would be hard pressed to decide which speaks the more pitiable dependence on external shows of esteem.

Just as the abuse sometimes visited on authors gratifies many readers, so these letters have something irresistibly comic about them. Spattering away, the veins of their foreheads standing out, these little compositions generally deliver the most naked view of the author's wounded vanity. And never with subtlety, for they are conceived in fury and scribbled in haste.

The dynamics of the A.B.M. are as follows: the author reads the review, at first with disbelief, then, as he realizes others will read it too, with passion. Instead of sleeping on the matter for a week or so, or, be-

simply getting on with his next book, he rushes to his typewriter and with his sense of injured merit in a hundred or a thousand words, is too impatient to revise, and certainly feels no impulse to keep a piece nine years. Rage propels him out to the mailbox, and for the next few weeks rage causes him to kick his foot and with knitted brow make sudden little sideways movements of his head, incomprehensible to his friends, few of whom have read the review. (Among those who have, half have mistaken it for a bad notice; the other half secretly agree with most of it, while still liking the author just as much as before.) Finally there arrives a copy of the offending periodical, and in it is the author's letter of complaint. Now it doesn't look the way it looked in the author's typewriter. It has not been altered at all by the editor, or even shortened. But now it reads as if some piling adolescent, fresh from the high school basketball team, has published a letter about a good he really is, and written it not very well. All the author's sarcastic rebuttals now seem both too acid and too lame, inviting the reader to regard him as an even weaker ass and loser than before.

THERE are certain inviolable conventions in these letters. The main one is to open by asserting that one doesn't like them. Thus:

To the Editor:
A copy of the review of _____ has just reached me in Australia. It is not my practice to comment on a review. But....

(The New York Times Book Review)

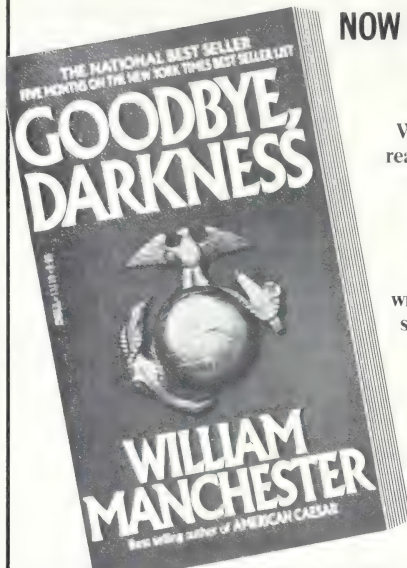
To the Editors:
Generally speaking one does not answer hostile reviews, especially self-refuting ones. But it would be a pity if readers....

(New York Review of Books)

The tradition is that authors should not question too much utterances of those who review their books. Normally, I adhere to this tradition. But a review of my latest book... raises an issue of

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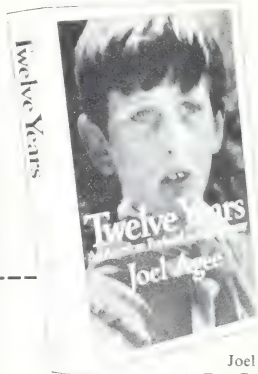
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—Alan Cheuse, *Saturday Review*



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principle which....
(New Statesman)

Other conventions of the A.B.M. are self-pity and self-praise. A classic performance in self-pity is the opening chord of Jan Morris's letter about her memoir of her gender change, *Conundrum*:

Sir,—Your cruel review of my Conundrum (April 26) reduced me to tears, of course, as its author doubtless intended: but I comforted myself with the thought ... that....

(Times Literary Supplement)

Sometimes the self-pity is more subtle, while aspiring to be just as heart-rending. Thus:

I accept full responsibility for the too numerous misprints, explaining only that the proofreading had to be undertaken while I was in hospital.

(Times Literary Supplement)

Sometimes the letter opens with a would-be ingratiating display of wit, as if to demonstrate that the writer is not really so angry as to be disabled from generating a little playful sarcasm:

Sir,—I am sorry that one of the grounds on which your reviewer... objects to my book... is that it is weighty. That however is probably the reason that, far from being unable to put it down, he was hardly able to take it up. It may account too for the inaccuracies and ineptness of his complaints—though not excuse them any more than it excuses the ill-tempered dismissiveness which they make evident....

(Times Literary Supplement)

In these letters a favorite form of self-praise is the citation of an authority greater than the reviewer. So:

To the Editors:
— accuses me of attempting to go behind —'s poetry, so I will refrain from speculating what could lie behind her extraordinarily vindictive review of my book.... For whatever it's worth, [the poet in question] liked the portions of my book that he read in manuscript; thought that my style was "fine"; and in his last letter to me, writ-

ten weeks before his death, wished me "good luck with your book." That matters infinitely more to me than the polemics of his posthumous spokesman....

(New York Review of Books)

Sometimes other reviewers can be invoked, in order to create the impression that this one bad review is merely an aberration—that, indeed, the whole reviewing fraternity has not agreed that your book is terrible:

This kind of reviewing, unfortunately now too common, which in effect helps to bar a writer's communication and denies his right to it, is intellectual hooliganism. I am happy that two other reviewers, — and —, who, one cannot doubt, know what they are talking about, have actually discussed my thesis and arguments, putting forward reasoned criticism while maintaining a favorable account.

(Times Literary Supplement)

Here's another nice one—so good that the reader may suspect, unjustly, that I have made it up. Now the complainant is not the author of the book reviewed, but merely someone patronized in passing. But notice that this writer, in addition to delivering a full measure of self-praise, also honors the A.B.M.'s other conventions.

To the Editors:

In his review of —'s —, — referred to and used my critical study... noting that I was not "competent to discuss the classical background" of —'s fiction. Ordinarily such an outrageous charge would not merit a rejoinder. However, since I was trained as a classicist who taught his discipline and published in the field before moving into Comparative Literature, I cannot allow —'s irresponsibility to go unchallenged....

My greatest satisfaction comes from the fact that I pleased the late Gilbert Highet, to whom the book was dedicated and who was not above sending me errata. Gilbert Highet is a name to reckon with. Frankly, I never heard of —.

(New York Review of Books)

It's clear that editors are very fond of printing these letters. One reason is fairly obvious: they add the drama of personal conflict to their normally gray pages. Another reason is that the letters are almost always funny, offering readers the spectacle of some pompous self-celebrator given ample iron room in which to parade his solicited hurt.

But the main reason editors like these letters is that they supply a signed copy the editors don't have to pay for. The principle has been thoroughly mastered by the publishers of sex magazines like *For*. They have learned that once you establish for the publication a tradition of lubricious self-praise, you can fill a third of a monthly magazine with fascinating copy at almost no cost whatever. The same principle operates with more genteel people. If sufficiently angry, an author who normally wouldn't think of writing a thousand words without payment is delighted to supply them for nothing in order to engage in his lit dance of self-justification. To eke out their free copy further, editors often try to cajole the original reviewer into composing an "answer" to the complaint. The best advice to reviewers is that ascribed to the British Foreign Office: never explain, never apologize. And, in addition, never write without payment. If ever tempted to a comment, reviewers should be adamant about not responding to an author who complains that he has been "misunderstood." If he has been, it's his fault, and no comment is called for. It's his fault because, as a writer, he's supposed to be adequate in matters of lucid address and explanation, and if he's failed there, he's failed everywhere.

But what should an author do when he receives an ecstatic review, or he imagines fully "understands" his work and values his book at its true worth? Should he write a different kind of letter, this one to the reviewer, thanking him and praising him for his perception? The answer is precisely the same as with the bad review: never. As usual, Johnson, the professional writer to think serious about the ethics of the trade, has the

it word: "Such acknowledgments never can be proper, since they st be paid either for flattery or tice."

Silence is the author's only proper ouse, unless he wants to publish etter like this, which I have never n and never expect to see:

Sir,—Decent reviewing is some- thing every author has a right to expect, and consequently I was distressed to read Mr. ———'s laudatory review of my Sanitary Engineering in Belgium and the Low Countries, which entirely fails to mention the clumsy prose

in which much of my book is couched—I was not feeling well two summers ago—and wholly overlooks the slick reasoning by which I make the transit from Part I to Part II, not to mention the inadequacies of the index, which I wrote myself, and the pretentiousness of the jacket blurb, which your reviewer ignorantly imputes to the mendacity of my publisher but which is actually of my own composition. Your readers deserve better than this. I am, sir,

Yours faithfully, □

HARPER'S/FEBRUARY 1982

TO THE EDITORS OF HARPER'S:

In his review of Paul Mariani's *William Carlos Williams: A New World Naked* ("Breaking the Line," *Harper's*, December 1981), Hugh Kenner writes of Williams that "In his mid-seventies he was still being rejected by the *Hudson Review*..." This statement is untrue. It is, moreover, Kenner's own fabrication; there is no basis for it in Mariani's biography. The truth is that neither in Dr. Williams's mid-seventies, nor at any previous time, was anything of his ever rejected by *The Hudson Review*. On the contrary, we had the pleasure of publishing his work on a number of occasions.

Here, for the record, is the list of Williams's appearances in *The Hudson Review*, six in all. In 1956, three poems: "The Gift," "Calypso," and "The Title"; in 1957, the long and important story "The Farmers' Daughters"; in 1960, "Pictures from Brueghel," a ten-page sequence of poems; again in 1960, two poems: "Paul" and "Suzy"; in 1961, four poems: "The Dance," "Jersey Lyric," "The Woodthrush," and "He has beaten about the bush long enough"; and in 1963, posthumously, four last poems: "The Art," "Greeting for Old Age," "Still Lives," and "Trala Trala La-La-La." Robert Lowell's moving tribute to Williams (in which he states that "Williams is part of the great breath of our literature. *Paterson* is our *Leaves of Grass*...") was published by us in 1961: Kenner acknowledges this, but with a sneer.

Although we would not have hesitated to return to Williams any poem or story which we felt to be of inferior quality (he himself, aware of the unevenness of some of his work, would in his generosity have been the first to approve), we in point of fact never had to do this. We liked everything he sent us: we accepted it all. One poem which he submitted to us was withdrawn when he learned that it was being published in another magazine, to which a friend had sent a copy; another poem, sent in at a later date, was called back by him for repairs—then resubmitted to us and published by us. Nothing was "rejected." Accordingly, Kenner's recollection that he "stood by once" as Williams opened a letter of rejection from us must be accounted a false memory.

Williams not only published in *The Hudson Review*, he also read it (or, in his illness, had it read to him), and evidently enjoyed it. In a letter which I cherish, sent to me after his death, Mrs. Williams wrote me that "Bill liked *Hudson Review* and I read it to him from cover to cover... so thank you for giving us many hours of rewarding reading."

FREDERICK MORGAN
Editor
The Hudson Review
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SEEING REDS

Hollywood, meet the American communists

by John Podhoretz

FOR WHATEVER reasons, actors are now firmly ingrained as personages in both American low and high cultures. Ninety years ago, hotels would not accommodate them; today no literary gathering is complete if not graced by the presence of someone like Lauren Bacall. Great actors, in fact, are held in the same sort of reverence that great writers inspired in the nineteenth century: when Lord Olivier himself departs for the next world, the outpouring of grief will probably come to resemble the nationwide mourning after the death of Victor Hugo in 1885. We have seen its kind

John Podhoretz is a student at the University of Chicago and the film critic for the American Spectator.

in our country following John Lennon's death. (Incidentally, Hugo wrote *Les Misérables*; Lennon wrote "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds," and not even by himself.)

Yet it does us well to remember that actors, despite their recent cultural cachet, are engaged in a profession of traditionally dubious merit. As Diderot remarked in his essay "The Paradox of Acting," there is something suspicious and unpraiseworthy about people who can don and doff personalities the way others don and doff clothes. Many actors seem to feel this way themselves, especially those whose claim to eminence is as firmly rooted in popular culture as, say, John Lennon's was. They wish to contribute *more*, and

those whose celebrity and box-office appeal are large enough often get a chance to—first by producing, then by directing and writing, their own films. Here they are often well served by enthusiasms whose social correctness is beyond doubt: they "become involved" in political and environmental issues (as has Robert Redford, the Oscar-less actor but Academy Award-winning director), in cultural affairs (as Jack Lemmon did when he became a regular participant and financial contributor to Robert Hutchins's Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions), or in a combination of both (as has Al Pacino, a leader of the women's liberation movement). It is important to remember that these men make it clear to the inte-



ers from *Time* and *Newsweek* they do not simply spend their acting: no, they think as well, all the time. And as writers and actors their mission sometimes is to be to force the rest of America to think just as hard and as they do.

these happy few, Warren Beatty, handsome and limited actor, has by far the greatest success. He appeared in a variety of mediocre films early in his career, but then in producing with *Bonnie Clyde*. He then made two more mediocre films (which he did not produce) and in 1971 left off acting for eighteen months to work for George McGovern's presidential campaign. "Warren not only cares about his country," McGovern told *Time* magazine, "but his judgment is also perceptive." *Time*'s Frank Rich that "mostly to be available for McGovern, Beatty rejected a number of major films: *The Godfather*, *The Godfather Part II*, *We Were the Great Gatsby*, *The Sting*." For these four films Beatty would easily have made millions, but his mind was on matters of greater importance. When they finally became a director with movie *Heaven Can Wait*, he changed the world that besides caring for its issues, he had good commercial judgment: the movie was an enormous success. Moreover, as director and author (with Elaine May) he proved himself an exquisitely master of cliché.

My idea of freedom," Beatty told Frank Rich, "is to live on top of a mountain with clean air... and there's a typewriter where you can sit a few hours a day and tell your story of things." Thus, in Beatty's best film, *Reds* (of which he is the co-author and the director), mastery of cliché is grafted onto a weighty political subject: not George McGovern, as it happens, but the American political "provision," a certain early Bolshevik leader John Reed, best known as the author of *Ten Days That Shook the World*. Reed is one of the few Americans to be buried in the Kremlin (he died in 1920). *Reds* is an amalgam of almost every cliché we have ever witnessed in a movie theater, espe-

cially those of the New Hollywood, with its conversations about "feelings" and "emotions" and its socially conscious themes. As such, it is anachronistic and something less than true to its subject.

In *Reds*, Reed (played by Beatty) is in love with a mediocre journalist named Louise Bryant (Diane Keaton), whom he marries. Both, however, want their own space. Even though he is a gifted writer, and she is not, her work is just as important as his. Does she cook all the meals? No, of course not, although he is humorously incompetent as a cook, and burns the roast. "Mmmm, it's delicious," says Louise, not wanting to hurt his feelings. When they are happy together, their dog leaps merrily about, and they have a Christmas tree in their living room. When they are unhappy, they go to different continents and stare out the window, each wondering how the other is doing. Louise, it seems, seeks liberation and a career; Reed is a little more interested in the Russian Revolution and in organizing labor unions. For this she upbraids him, and he does feel guilty; perhaps he should pay more attention to her. When he is paying especially little attention, she has an affair with a dramatist named Gene O'Neill, who writes about the sea a lot. Jack is a revolutionary, but he is also a man, and enjoys a little relaxing sex on the side with other women.

Hollywood, meet the American communists. They enjoy bourgeois domesticity as much as the next man: they're human. They want to change things; they're idealists. They do change things: they're heroes. In Russia, Jack and Louise develop a truly satisfying working relationship, obviously inspired by the Revolution: finally getting over their extreme sensitivity to criticism, they openly edit each other's writing. A four-minute montage sums up the mating of domestic and worldly harmonies. "The Internationale" begins to play in the background as the couples march with torches down a Petrograd street. (The recording

used is by the Red Army Chorus, "available on Folkways Records.") Then Louise and Jack are shown writing furiously; then more proles; then Louise and Jack, warming to each other again, having a snowball fight; then more proles; then Jack and Louise reconciling their marriage. Their room is dark; the Red Army Chorus proclaims the coming of the International; Jack rises and descends, rises and descends, in rhythm with the music. (Revolutions make the best marriage counselors.)

All this, and we have merely reached the intermission. It is romantic, it is stirring, but who are these people? They are communists, yes, and they know lots of other communists, like Max Eastman, Bill Haywood, and Emma Goldman. But they are also two characters acting out those two eternal Hollywood contrasts: fighting and making up. Beatty's script repeatedly places Jack and Louise in small, ugly rooms with white peeling walls as they scream at each other to be honest. "Do you want to be honest about it?" Louise demands of Jack. "Honest? Yeah, I'll be honest," he replies, and for five minutes the honesty flies.

Now I was not alive in 1915, but I seriously doubt that two members of America's radical, avant-garde intelligentsia spoke to each other as though they were at an Esalen retreat. Louise often talks about her growth as (what else?) a "person." When Jack comes to her in France, she solemnly informs him: "I feel I've grown." Her growth notwithstanding, Jack finds himself troubled, in the year 1920, by the overwhelming strength and power not only of the capitalist bosses but of the oil companies, too, evidently as evil in Reed's day as in our own. And Emma Goldman, disillusioned by what has happened in Russia immediately following the Revolution, tells Jack that the Soviet Union has become "a militaristic state that suppresses human rights."

Rather than chronicling the years 1915 to 1920, then, *Reds* runs the gamut of the 1970s, from feminism to the Helsinki Watch, from encounter groups to the human-po-

MOVIES

tential movement, and all this, as I say, before the intermission. After the intermission, we might as well be watching another movie—a movie called *Dr. Zhivago*, to be exact. You may remember that in *Dr. Zhivago* fate and the Russian Revolution separate Yuri and Laura for most of the second half of the movie. In *Reds*, we get the same thing, with Louise and Jack snowshoeing desolately across subarctic tundra in search of each other or Moscow or both. When they do finally meet, they gaze at each other and hug. A few days later, Jack dies. It is a great love story, spanning five years and interrupted by business trips.

REDS clearly demonstrates what Hollywood movies often do to unfamiliar “historical” situations: they turn them into Hollywood movies. The Russian Revolution, and the events that precede and follow it, and the characters variously in its thrall, are important to this movie in part because they join together and separate, and add to the problems of, two lovers in varying states of matrimony. *Reds* is a love story in Bolshevik garb; so is *Ninotchka*, with Greta Garbo, which is much funnier, much sharper, and half as long.

But there is more to *Reds* than that, because it is also a certain kind of modern American “quality” film, with all that genre’s artistic and intellectual pretensions and political sympathies. Robert Altman’s *Buffalo Bill* and the *Indians*, John Schlesinger’s *Yanks*, Fred Zinnemann’s *Julia*, and Martin Ritt’s *The Front* are just a few examples of this now popular school. They all owe a debt to E. L. Doctorow’s novel *Ragtime*, which made it intellectually respectable for popular artists to revise America’s past, especially those times we regarded as “golden,” and to use the revised past as a metaphor for the present. In them a particular character—or, at the very least, the director’s perspective—is imbued with the perfect modern conscience and with present-day liberal views; the character guides us through the film, establishing ironic counterpoint be-

tween our enlightenment and their foolishness.

A similar purpose leads Beatty to impose the domestic struggles of the 1970s on the volatile national and international struggles of the 1910s, and to dramatize his own version of a time very much on certain people’s minds these days—the McCarthyite 1950s—by lavishing special attention on the first American Red Hunt in 1919. In *Reds*, the counterpoint is between the Senate committees, the redneck union busters, the cold bourgeois Portland society from which Reed and Louise both come, and the free-spirited, sexually liberated, “caring,” and “involved” Greenwich Village lives of Eastman, Goldman, and Reed himself. The Reeds and their friends weren’t just communists, after all, they were *progressives* (a word often used in the film), and we all know what progressives believe in: revolution, sure, but mainly in sexual liberation, women’s liberation, birth control, and, of course, honesty about one’s emotions.

Thus the true character of Reed’s political convictions, intrinsically and historically, is lost or obscured in *Reds*. Beatty has only the vaguest historical sense of who John Reed, Max Eastman, and Emma Goldman were, but that they were, in his view, “liberals in a hurry”—that they had all the right kinds of liberal impulses and sympathies—there can be no doubt, and he does get brownie points merely by mentioning their names and claiming their historical subject as his own. By attempting to portray them, he is also claiming for himself the title of a serious thinker, and a politically acceptable thinker at that. (Woody Allen got a good many people to think just the same thing by starring in *The Front*, and by dropping at least one hundred names in each of his last four movies.)

ALL OF THIS adds up to a special sort of dramatic failure, not new with Beatty, of course. Robert Warshaw discovered it in Arthur Miller’s play *The Crucible*, regarded by many as a courageous statement about the

McCarthy hearings. That Miller’s play failed to comprehend the complexity of its subject, Warshaw pointed out, was obviously less important than the many critics who praised it for the fact that Miller was “speaking out.” “What does [Miller] say when he speaks out?” Warshaw asks. “In your mind. He speaks out.”

Beatty, for his part, speaks out, but he does not have the skill or the complexity of mind to portray revolutionary passions, thoughts, beliefs, or actions properly. He may, however, know when to cut away from the dog. This again is evidence of his commercial judgment, but it may deceive a few people about the nature of communists in Reed’s time, and, by corollary, of communists today.

Reds is less a pro-communist movie than a Hollywood romance in which communism is an almost arbitrary backdrop providing “color.” Tell me why no one accuses Beatty of trying to ingratiate himself with the audience through propaganda. This same movie could have been set in Milan in 1200, with an American Fascist glorifying in the triumph of Mussolini. But you imagine such a movie being made in Hollywood today? No, would you predict a critical reaction so amiably indifferent to the political implications of such a movie?

Perhaps Warren Beatty fancied himself a serious filmmaker with an original point of view, bravely telling a subject no one else has tackled before him; not a few critics have seen him this way. But his real talent is for manipulating clichés, and in the service of earning a reputation for “seriousness” and an intellectual legitimacy that popular culture cannot provide by itself. Lillian Hellman once coined a term to describe a similar phenomenon: those three people (the most prominent example being Leonard Bernstein) who, suddenly in demand not only as entertainers but also as thinkers, rise on the occasion with a pretentiousness that only a modern-day Trollope could do justice to. “Broadway intellectuals,” Hellman called them. Warren Beatty, we may say, is just a quintessential “Hollywood intellectual.”

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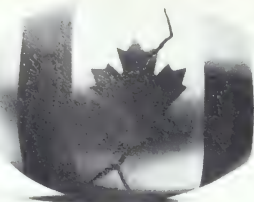
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Notes for "Eight to the Bar"

The unclued entries are musical forms: rhapsody, operetta, nocturne, sonatina, concerto, oratorio, overture, and madrigal.

1. toeholds, anagram; 2. haricots, anagram; 3. mar-ria-g.e.(reversal); 4. remedial, La- ide(a)-Mer, reversal; 5. hand-ball; 6. naturals, two meanings; 7. chorales, hidden; 8. riba- L-dry; 9. p-rattles; 10. pinoch (anagram)-le; 11. leg-horns; 12. vamp-ires; 13. I'm Modest; 14. trammels, trams around mel(ody); 15. s(E)a-coast, anagram; 16. V.Ero(n)i.ca; 17. c(ice)rone; 18. Slavonic, anagram; 19. p(a-r)avane; 20. c(an-a)ries; 21. heresies, anagram; 22. per-V-erts(anagram); 23. con notes; 24. calliope, hidden; 25. oc(reversal)- ari(n)as; 26. scan-tier; 27. Han(over)s; 28. pan-the-R(ichard Strauss)s; 29. albacore, anagram of ba(r)carole; 30. sca(B)rous, anagram; 31. B-alloted; 32. snootier, anagram; 33. B-righter; 34. sham-rock; 35. th(e)-re(she)d; 36. har(Eli)ps; 37. woollens, anagram; 38. out-works; 39. sobriety, anagram; 40. bawdries, anagram; 41. dish-ware(homonym).

PUZZLE

PRINTER'S DEVILRY

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

This month's instructions:

The title is the name for a special type of clue, used throughout in this puzzle. Each clue is a passage from which the printer has removed a hidden answer, closing the gap, taking liberties sometimes with punctuation and spacing, but not disturbing the order of the remaining letters. Thus in the sentence *Gosh, are stoppers ever ingenious—they keep you from spilling liquor!* the word **PERSEVERING** is hidden; the printer could remove it and offer as the clue: *Go shares to pen IOUs—they keep you from spilling liquor.* Each passage, when complete, makes sense, and each clue is full enough to hint at what the subject is about... but it does not give a definition of the word that's been removed.

The answers include two proper nouns. 21A is a combining form. A variant spelling is involved in 11A.

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 79.

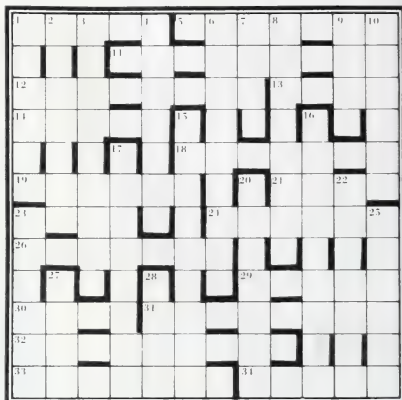
CLUES

ACROSS

- When smiling Donny Osmond went on a sleighride: "Hi! steed, up!" (5)
- To an old-won age, girl often seems sexually precocious (7)
- As a sugar substitute's a cure—had some bad press (9)
- The alchemist's shop contained secret re sure sand powders (8)
- Did you evert a sipper? Did you know it's as almondish (that's smoked)? (4)
- When starting a codex, if I ruminate the title page (the monk's aid) (5)
- Inept Thanksgiving carvers want to, tots—ticks off the turkey! (7)
- It's hard to take Class I copiously with all those overweight singers dying of consumption! (6)
- To the French dips: O man! it guts as good as burgundy! (4)
- Who wed in the fall will be ripe by spring (4)
- The absentminded carp enter former level and drill (6)
- War: the only thing flourishing on the Scottish hills last summer? (7)
- The breathless orchestra doesn't care. Forte... make in fast numbers (5)
- The little angel loves jazz. See the chewing! (4)
- The amorous señorita Romero's upsetting their *Ring* performance (8)
- The economy's been in as pagan became president (9)
- I found the play, from the opening, curious. And it stayed dull right to the final one (7)
- "An Epidemic of Broken Wagon." Shaw? Right, working overtime (5)

CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Printer's Devilry, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by February 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive a one-year



DOWN

- What, her out of place? Certainly not at an S&M party! (6)
- OPEC sheikhs are often accused of "blab" nationalism (7)
- "Before the lady," testamentary lawyer writes, "one will/won't state planning meetings?" (9)
- While you're refingering bait, chop in (7)
- You won't see a safe driver's canes without first seeing his signal (9)
- My learning to kettledrum, or that I might have arthritis in my hands (4)
- For its new head, the WCTU wet (0 tall is tun, surprisingly!) (8)
- Some like venison cooked in drippings (and wince) (4)
- Should the dieter drink only through the top, lace whole milk in his menu now and then (6)
- Rather than contribute to a news pallor and, rather unsurprisingly, both chose TV for a forum (9)
- Many a Southerner, liking the romantic look of old, pins wisteria to grow on them (9)
- In the Middle Ages, was the black mister as the church claims? (8)
- Fiancé, re monies once enjoying currency: have developed the modern Iranian rites (7)
- Even a pro needs years, Tom, as tenor cello sonata (7)
- Oberon and Ariel (Ares) in Shakespeare's plays (6)
- It's nice to see, Nancy—Beanie sold jokes—she never tires of them (6)
- The impatient ballerina, with a tear in her, tugs toward robe, Mistress Fixit (4)
- There! A renovation! Sure sin sight as the Pope's monks never bare their heads (4)

subscription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the March issue. Winners' names will be printed in the April issue. Winners of the December puzzle, "Battleships," are Cecelia Chapman Justice, McLean, Virginia; James R. Purcell, Seattle, Washington; and Robert J. Tove, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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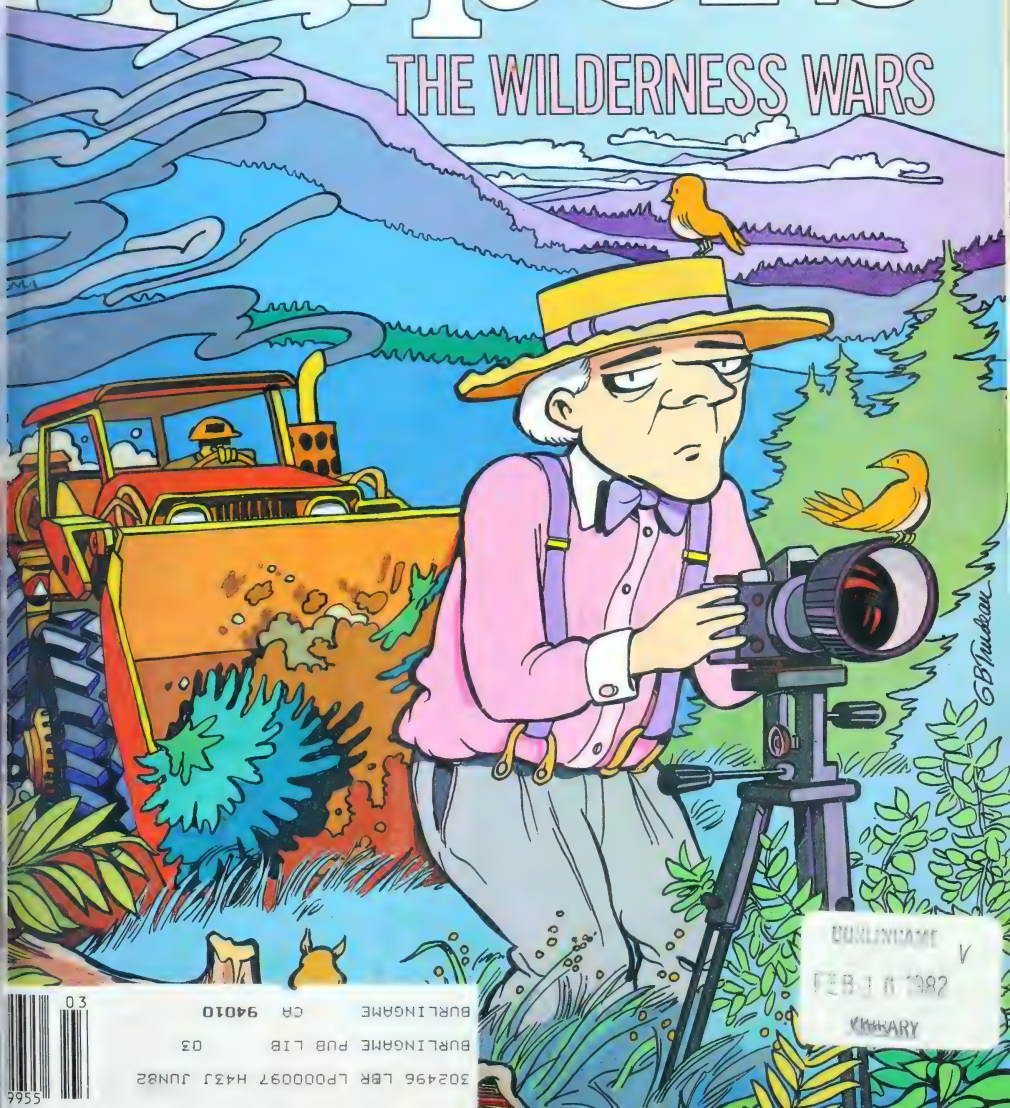
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Wrong Route to Peace

Across Western Europe, pacifist passions are on the rise. Marchers have hit the streets in large numbers in some capitals to protest measures taken by their own governments in their own defense.

The demonstrations are well-meant. They are understandable in the context of the deep-seated yearning of all people for a peaceful world.

Yet the new outcries are disturbing on both sides of the Atlantic. For they represent a turning away from reality. They reflect a welling up of isolationist sentiments that pose potential danger to the alliance, anchored by the U.S., which has kept Western Europe free and secure for upwards of three decades.

Many Europeans are aroused, in particular, by the proposed deployment of new breeds of U.S.-built missiles on European soil to modernize NATO's nuclear forces, an upgrading made necessary by Soviet deployment of improved missiles.

There's an irony about the new palpitations being expressed in the streets and salons of Europe. It was pointed up in a recent late-night TV talk show in England, with the audience participating. Two politicians were discussing the NATO missile deployment when a young man rose from the audience and asked: "Why are we protesting? We were the ones who asked the Americans to send the missiles over to protect us from the Russian missiles that are already there. The Americans didn't insist. We asked."

Yes, the Europeans did ask, back in the late '70s. Now, in a turnabout, some of them are calling for unilateral nuclear disarmament. They seem to feel that if Western Europe lowers its nuclear defenses, then the Soviets, in their inherent goodness, will dismantle all the missiles they're emplacing and targeting at capitals and

other key sites in the West. The notion seems to be that weakened resolve by the West will somehow cause the Soviets to lose their expansionist appetite.

That is a barren dream, a mythical vision. It flies against all the evidence of the Soviets' unslackened determination, backed by a military buildup of gargantuan dimensions, to exploit every opportunity to extend their military and political influence around the world, wherever and whenever they can. The Soviets' opportunism can be likened to that of a hotel burglar who skulks along the corridors at night, checking doorknobs, ready to enter any room he finds unlocked. The West must keep its doors locked.

Unilateral arms reduction is appeasement. It could be suicidal. Arms reduction surely is a cherished goal. But it must be *bilateral*. It must consist of specific, fair, verifiable measures growing out of negotiations between the two sides.

In a perfect world, there would be no nuclear weapons at all. In the real world, nuclear weapons exist. So long as they do, the best way of reducing the risk that they'll be used against you is to make certain that any nation considering their use is dissuaded from doing so by the knowledge that you are capable of striking back in kind.

That's deterrence. It has been at the heart of Western security since the end of World War II. Its validity remains unsailable today. But its continued efficacy is now being threatened by a misguided movement on the part of some in Europe who quiver in the face of the potent, ever-growing military machine to the east.

They envisage a neutral Europe, with military ties to neither of the superpowers. What they do not see, or are blinded to, is a neutral Europe becoming a neutered Europe.



**UNITED
TECHNOLOGIES**

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LETTERS

Debts to the disabled

Roger Starr's "Wheels of Misfortune" [*Harper's*, January] should be read by anyone who lives or works with handicapped people. I wish that I could converse or correspond with him at length on the subject because I think that while he asks some very important questions, Mr. Starr makes some assumptions that might not support the weight of a few facts.

The author appears to ascribe a universal attitude to the handicapped and their advocates, an attitude that holds that a specialized "right" to treatment, education, or rehabilitation is firmly enconced in the Bill of Rights. While some of us still cling to that idea, the field in general is fast becoming disabused of it; witness the recent *Pennhurst* decision of the federal court. Though the handicapped movement has sometimes made the tactical error of asserting such an inalienable right, it has met with greater success and has offered a better argument when it has suggested (as does Robert Burt in his essay "Judicial Action to Aid the Retarded") that the handicapped constitute a "discrete and insular minority," one that requires legislative or judicial intervention to ensure that it enjoys the equal protection of the law. There is a difference between the two arguments, and Mr. Starr should recognize that. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act is a case in point; it does not require the states to provide education to the handicapped *because* they are handicapped and have an inherent right. Rather, it requires them to provide public education to

the handicapped wherever they provide public education generally. Co cannot be an excuse for failing to meet, at least broadly, this obligation.

Mr. Starr flatly assumes that the commitments made to the handicapped by the national government cannot be met. I would say that depends on which school of political economy one is enrolled in and how one feels about redistribution of income (something the editorial board of *The New York Times*, of which Mr. Starr is a member, is not going to stand on its head for). I believe that they could be met. Mr. Starr's thesis is questionable as long as it treats aid to the handicapped on as an expense, and not as a cost-effective, tax-saving investment.

I will concede that the handicapped ought to accept some measure of compromise on public transportation, especially where adequate alternative systems are offered. Perhaps the issue in certain cases ought not to be "equal" treatment but "fair and reasonable" treatment. The notion that special transportation even where adequate, is an affront to human dignity is, I think, losing currency.

Mr. Starr barely touches on other complicated problems that deserve extensive treatment. He might be surprised to find that not all, perhaps not most, special educators consider "mainstreaming," in its present state to be sound practice. I'm glad, incidentally, that the author said what he said about the "hidden self-approbation" of some people who work with the handicapped. It's too often true. I wish that someone from inside the field had said that.

I do hope that on reflection, Mr. Starr will peer out from behind the fashionable facade of "diminishing expectations" and see the handicapped as seeking a fair chance for themselves, not merely a foot in the Treasury door.

RON SCOTT
Canton, N.Y.

Never mind Mr. Starr's condescending admiration for the will of the disabled or his patient understanding of their "rage." Never mind his narrowly legalistic analysis (clumsily legalistic, at that, for it misstates the reach of the Rehabilitation Act to local government and omits the Fourteenth Amendment from its exploration of the source of disability rights). Overlook the disingenuous coyness that asks, "Could the money be better spent on other educational programs for the benefit of students and society as a whole?" and then answers that it is not "apparent how to answer that question." Forget Mr. Starr's silliness—for example, that the effort to make public education accessible to disabled children "has been entirely successful."

The bottom line of Mr. Starr's argument is more troublesome than the manipulations it takes to get there. Mr. Starr's cost-benefit analysis measures the disability-rights movement as a sentimental journey in collision with the tough realities of the world. The world, for Mr. Starr, is the world of the nondisabled, the world of those who can ride inaccessible buses to work and enter a courthouse through the front door and whose kids play on the junior-high tennis team. The problem is in the different way people look at the world.

Mr. Starr defers the claims of the disabled because they are claims of a minority for extras from a society that struggles to provide necessities for the majority. The issue is: what is necessary?

If one determines that it is necessary to funnel millions of public dollars into an interstate highway system or to build athletic facilities for state universities, then one will do so. You pay what you must for what is necessary.

For the disabled, and for some of the nondisabled, full participation of the disabled in society is necessary for the disabled and for the nondisabled who want and need their talents, their insights, and their companionship.

If that's not tough-minded enough for Mr. Starr, let him study one provision of the U.S. Constitution, that minimum limitation on our society—the Fourteenth Amendment. Basically, Mr. Starr, it says this: government need not provide buses and schools, but if it does, it must provide for all, without discrimination and without purportedly equal facilities that segregate the powerless from the rest of us. That's not just an ideal, or a sentiment. It's the law.

Mr. Starr's tears for the many failed "tests" of our civilization may seem a little crocodilian in a civilization that can and does produce generation after generation of Barbie dolls (who, by the way, appear to lead very full lives in the mainstream of our society). The resources are there, Mr. Starr, for what is deemed necessary.

Still, one has to admire Mr. Starr's will to be tough in a soft and sentimental world and be patient with his rage, the rage of the comfortable, for whom maintaining their share of limited resources is absolutely necessary.

HERBERT A. EASTMAN
St. Louis, Mo.

I am one of the "somewhat distorted human form[s]" described by Roger Starr in "Wheels of Misfortune" who, although "hopelessly crippled," possesses "the effort and strength of will . . . to win the mobility and independence of the unfactified." And my mobility—a breath-operated motorized wheelchair—came as the result of "large amounts of money . . . beyond [my] resources." Starr unwittingly touches on a major reason that most people with disabilities—especially severe ones—subsist at or below the poverty level: the aids needed for independence, such as a motorized stretch-er, are exorbitantly priced, and most people with disabilities live on extremely low fixed incomes.

Therefore the ergonomics of being disabled decrees that the resources required by the disabled come "from somewhere beyond [their] reach..."

As a "human form" I resent the implied message of Starr's article: this country does and should have priorities that outweigh the needs and the rights of the more than 35 million people with mental and physical disabilities. In fact, the tone of the entire article is that of a rationale for ignoring what Starr refers to as the rage, or the "motivating force . . . especially that of disabled persons who have lost the use of their limbs, but whose minds, talents, and education are of a high order." Why should not these disabled, whom Starr graphically describes, exhibit rage when architectural and attitudinal barriers rather effectively keep them from the rights taken for granted by the temporarily able-bodied?

I refuse to believe that this country and its officials have become so callous that even though they permit the manufacture of costly, sophisticated military hardware, much of it ineffective, they will ignore the needs and the rights of the disabled. There must be equality at all costs.

Starr himself is disabled; he suffers from "apologia syndrome," as he apologizes for the government's belated efforts to grant the disabled their rights, and for the lack of money to implement these efforts. But the solution is simple: permit all disabled who are qualified and who want to work to do so and still retain the benefits they may receive (as is done in Sweden). They will pay taxes on the money earned while still having a cushion to help provide for their special needs and expenses. Eliminate the discrepancy between what a blind Social Security recipient is permitted to make while still retaining his benefits, and what a physically disabled Social Security recipient can earn.

CAROL ANN MOORE
Greeley, Colo.

Roger Starr's "Wheels of Misfortune" successfully broaches the delicate question of who is paying the bill for the handicapped in language

even the most guilt-ridden, sensitive taxpayer can understand. For those who were bewitched by the "small is beautiful" economic philosophy a few years back, Mr. Starr offers the words to break the spell: "unless the economy is constantly expanding, it is impossible for one group to get more without another getting less."

In the depths of the worst recession since 1975, I am looking hard at any group's claim on my tax dollars. I number among my friends people who have been permanently injured in accidents and wars, and I am sensitive to the difficulties of their adjustment to a relatively inflexible world. However, most of these handicapped individuals would have been able to move around without "accessible transportation systems" or special elevators. Someone missed a key element in measuring demand when he forgot to ask the consumer if he would avail himself of all this equipment. The experience of the Los Angeles RTD is testimony both to the poor estimate of final demand for the service and to the very human desire for privacy and self-sufficiency.

Meanwhile, public schools, buildings, and transportation are being held hostage by the handicapped special-interest group, which probably is out of touch with the wishes of its members and probably is more in touch with the grantsmanship-funds generation. My local supermarket has six parking spaces reserved for the handicapped, and I have never seen a wheelchair in the grocery. Since I live in Florida, the odds should be higher than average for such an encounter. I do see increasingly regressive taxation bearing heavily on my economic class, a situation that I resent and vow to fight with my right to vote.

As a survivor of the Sixties, I still wear my liberal political badge with pride, but as a layman street-fighting economist, I can still spit out the phrase "cost-benefit analysis" and acknowledge its utility. The time has come for the handicapped lobby to check its math and pay its own bills.

DEV STRISCHEK
Coral Springs, Fla.

ROGER STARR REPLIES:

Much of the discussion seems to center around two difficult questions about which my correspondents and I disagree. One is what constitutes a "right"; the second, what is the source of wealth that makes possible the achievement of "rights"?

Ron Scott's letter seems to me to present an intelligent and reasoned attitude to both questions. He starts with a quote that suggests that the handicapped as a minority are entitled to equal protection by the law, but he ends up offering, as I would, the suggestion that "fair and reasonable" is a more appropriate term than "equal." I agree wholeheartedly with his views of the acceptability of special transportation systems as an alternative to the retrofitting of municipal systems. Mr. Scott believes that programs for the handicapped will ultimately prove self-liquidating by generating among their beneficiaries a greatly increased economic capacity. If this is true, as I hope it can be, the size and reasonableness of the initial investment become matters of major importance.

I am insufficiently familiar with the legal status of handicapped workers' earnings to evaluate Carol Ann Moore's proposal in detail. It makes great sense at first reading. I have trouble, however, with her lively use of the word "rights," which she sums up in the sentence, "There must be equality at all costs." The fact is that there may never be equality between people's capacity to perform, and that there can be no "right" that is supreme over all other rights. The so-called right of children to an education depends on whether the economy in which they live can produce food and shelter without their labor and that of their teachers. The immense prosperity of the years since World War II has fostered the presumption that resources are unlimited, and the creation of wealth less important than the goodwill with which it is distributed. Many, including me, question these hypotheses.

I envy Herbert Eastman's willingness to believe that the Constitution produces rights even if they can be secured only by the operations of an economic system. Presumably you

will fight for "equal" rights for the handicapped in the courts, just as sentenced prisoners fight for better conditions in penal institutions, to take only one example. After some years of so-called judicial activism on behalf of prisoners, judges are beginning to learn that they have no power to appropriate money for legislatures, while legislators and executives have found that they cannot appropriate money without depreciating its value unless the economy produces the requisite wealth. Money itself is merely a claim for goods and services, and the economic rights that you read into the Fourteenth Amendment are merely claims for money. Public policy must mediate the claims that surge from the society; the handicapped assert but one of them.

Their war

I wish to express my deep thanks to Paul Fussell and to *Harper's* for printing his moving account "My War" [January] at a time when there is all too much facile talk about nuclear missiles and scenarios for "survivability."

Like Mr. Fussell, I survived. Had I been born two or three years earlier, I might have been one of the dozens of dead German boys amid whose corpses he had his anguished awakening that November morning in Alsace in 1944. As it was, I survived the torching of our home in the firestorm that incinerated Leipzig the year before, and subsequent bombing raids that left enough mangled corpses to burden a thirteen-year-old's memory for the rest of his life.

Thus my heart goes out to Mr. Fussell, that rara avis among native Americans, someone who looked into the jaws of the Monster and understood its nature as profoundly as do the regular inhabitants of the European "theater." There, the understanding is instinctive, a societal trait passed from parent to child along with the family genes. For Americans, it often takes infantry combat to instill that sense of true abhorrence. But Fussell's perception is rare even among infantrymen, who

ought in foreign lands where people easily turned into a blur of krauts, ops, or gooks.

I hope it will please Mr. Fussell to know, at this late stage, that when he was being shot at in the Alsace and beyond the Rhine, many boys like me had begun to cheer him on, albeit silently. Listening to the BBC in secret, we sensed that if the Russians got to us first, their rage, after what Germans had done to their country in the name of all Germans, would doom us to the fate of the populations of East Prussia, Silesia, and other eastern provinces.

I was not yet fifteen when I survived the final tank and artillery assault on our battered little town in April 1945. That I escaped being put into a uniform attests merely to the utter chaos surrounding us then.

The American soldiers who followed the assault troops a day or two later were on the whole correct and professional. Their spit and polish astonished us, as did their sleek, well-kept joviality. Their presence gave us the buffer we needed to live through the arrival, some months later, of the Soviet Army, themselves a ragtag lot of survivors from a thousand miles of battles across burned earth, now ragging past the clicking cameras of GIs perched atop shiny jeeps. Our region was destined to become part of the German Democratic Republic, a euphemism whose irony Mr. Fussell should appreciate.

Germany paid with the loss of its eastern provinces and the permanent division of the rest. In the light of what had happened, it was a heavy atonement at no unjust price. But the total, unquestioned defeat of the Nazi Reich was also a gift beyond measure, not least for the Germans themselves, even if it has unevenly benefited those who now live in the comfort of a stable, modern democracy, the Federal Republic. We all, including this German expatriate, are indebted to Fussell and his fellow infantrymen.

WOLFGANG E. G. SAXON
New York, N.Y.

Paul Fussell experienced his "My War" in the 103rd Infantry "Cactus" Division, as did I.

The minuscule residue of war's romance and exhilaration that survived stateside training disappeared during my lumbering three-minute run with full pack across an open meadow toward the Alsatian hamlet of Rougville: Ashettino fell with a mortal head wound, Pearlman struck in the abdomen, medic Englund hit while attending another's wound.

Thirty-six years later, I viewed the meadow once more from the rise from which our first combat attack launched. I felt an odd resentment—that the little valley had not been preserved as some sort of memorial to my facing up to the reality of war. The grassy slope of 1944 is now covered by neat, modern, suburban-type homes. The open meadow has in its center a stylish restaurant. Few of the rustic stone houses that were the object of our attack remain.

This resentment fed on the indignation that had resulted from the inability of the French Tourist Bureau to locate Rougville—the hamlet so important in my life. I had been repeatedly directed to Rougemont. A personal, centimeter-by-centimeter study of a Michelin road map finally disclosed the existence and location of Rougville.

One month after revisiting the hamlet by the Taintrux River, I was reunited for the first time with ten survivors of Company E, 409th Regiment. Our postwar histories confirmed what I had believed—that we were a unique group of PFC infantrymen as we went on line in November 1944. We had been gathered from disbanded AST (Army Specialized Training) programs from college campuses to fill ranks depleted by the departure of our predecessors, as replacements for the units that stormed the Normandy beaches and hedgerows. Seven of the eleven ex-PFCs were college graduates, among them, by my reckoning, three Ph.D.s and three holding master's degrees.

DAVID D. DRAVES
Durham, N.H.

Singular foresight

Because the review by Richard Holmes of *The Lisle Letters* ["Six-

teenth-Century Nixon Tapes," *Harper's*, January] was such a splendid one, I feel I must correct an error in his account. The University of Chicago Press is not the co-publisher of what Mr. Holmes describes as "one of the greatest sources of 'eavesdropping' history ever discovered"; we are the sole publishers of the seven volumes. When Faber & Faber decided they could not afford to publish *The Lisle Letters*, the University of Chicago Press signed an exclusive contract with Miss Muriel St. Clare Byrne giving us world rights.

Needless to say, the decision of the director of this press, Morris Philipson, to go ahead alone with the project has turned out to be not only an intelligent and courageous one but a decision that has won praise on both sides of the Atlantic.

ANN BARRET
Publicity Manager
The University of Chicago Press
Chicago, Ill.

The art of mashing

I really enjoyed the hysterical article "How to Pick Your Nose," by Judith Martin [*Harper's*, January]. I did not, however, agree with her solution to the mushed-ice-cream problem. She, like most people in the world, doesn't understand the difference between melted ice cream and mushed ice cream. When ice cream has melted it is warm and rather disgusting. Mush, on the other hand, is the best way to eat ice cream. It is still cold, has the firmness of unmashed ice cream but a creamier texture.

There is no way to compare the two. Miss Manners should have devised a method to mush ice cream in public. I try to do it under the table, but my father, who is unable to understand or appreciate the gourmet quality of mushed ice cream, does not like ice-cream mashing to be done under the table or anywhere else for that matter. My solution to the problem is to mush slowly and when nobody is looking.

ELIZABETH EMERY
Philadelphia, Pa.
HARPER'S/MARCH 1982

WAITING FOR LENNY

Stinginess masquerading as charity.

by Michael Kinsler

ON JANUARY 13, Lenny Skutnik dived into the icy Potomac and saved the life of a woman who had been aboard the Air Florida plane that crashed after takeoff from Washington's National Airport. Skutnik was acting in a private capacity, not in his official government role as a \$14,000-a-year gofer at the Congressional Budget Office. Speaking to some business executives in New York the next day, President Reagan praised Skutnik's courage. "Nothing had picked him out particularly to be a hero, but without hesitation there he was and he saved her life." Reagan offered Skutnik as an illustration of his theme that the proper way to solve our country's problems is through private initiative. By "private initiative," Reagan means two different things: the free-enterprise system of private capitalism, of course, but also private good works and charity. These latter activities are often grouped under the rubric

"voluntarism," in implicit contrast to the compulsory nature of the government's financing arrangements.

Reagan has struck the chord of voluntarism a lot recently, as the federal social-welfare cutbacks have begun to take effect. In December, he announced the formation of a "President's Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives." Its purpose, says a task force handout, is to demonstrate the president's "concern for those people affected by the fundamental change now occurring in the servicing of social programs" by encouraging private citizens and corporations to step into the breach. In contrast to the success of voluntary good works, Reagan said on January 14, "too often those meant to benefit most from government-imposed solutions paid the highest price and bore the deepest scars when they failed." But the superiority of voluntarism is not just a matter of results; it is a matter of principle. That principle, Reagan said, is freedom: "This can be an era of losing freedom or one of reclaiming it." He went on to compare a summer job program sponsored by New York corporations (private-sector initiative) with the Soviet crackdown in Poland (Big Government). Reagan prefers the private-sector initiative.

OF ALL of Reagan's reasons for cutting back on government help for citizens in distress—the need for tax cuts to stimulate productivity; bureaucratic waste and fraud; the harm welfare does to its own beneficiaries; and so on—this notion of substituting private philanthropy is surely the most fatuous. Consider, for example,

the problem of rescuing people who are drowning in the Potomac as the result of a plane crash. One approach—the Reagan approach, apparently—is to rely on the private-sector initiative of people like Lenny Skutnik. The other approach—the Big Government approach—is to send National Park Service helicopters to lift people out of the water. At the early stage in the Reagan revolution, the Park Service still has helicopters, and four lives were saved on January 13 through an atavistic exercise of burdensome government interference. Big Government, 4; Private Sector Initiative, 1.

But perhaps it's not that simple. Conservatives argue that the existence of massive government welfare services has numbed the charitable impulse in individuals. When the government cuts back on social welfare (cutting people's taxes in the process), the charitable instinct will flower. Perhaps, in other words, those gawkers along the Potomac

PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVE.



ABC-TV Photo

BURDENSOME GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION.





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knew for sure that the government would not be sending in helicopters (and ice-cutting boats and ambulances and other paraphernalia of the welfare state), more of them might be willing to dive in themselves. Government shouldn't be discouraging such noble instincts. So cancel those helicopters. Right?

In this context the argument sounds absurd, as it's intended to. That's because nobody, not even Reagan, may be not even libertarian philosopher Robert Nozick, treasures his freedom so much that he would rather drown than see the coercive powers of the state used to finance his rescue. Voluntarism is fine, but drowning people shouldn't have to rely on it. But this absurd example clarifies exactly what the Reagan people wish to muddle with their talk of replacing government programs with private initiative. Labeling the matter "rights" is a red flag, so let's just say it's a question of what help people ought to get. The call for "voluntarism" is a way of denying people government help while still claiming to believe that they ought to be helped. I think there are a lot of poor, sick, uneducated, jobless people who—given the resources of our society—ought to be helped. President Reagan claims to think so too, yet he would leave them to be helped by "private-sector initiative." He can't mean it. In truth, he must be willing to let them drown.

The argument for private enterprise and the argument for private philanthropy are very different. It is one thing to say that free-market capitalism, by channeling selfishness into socially productive activity, can do more to lift people out of poverty than any number of well-meaning government programs. President Reagan says this, and he's right. It's quite another to concede that the invisible hand cannot do everything that needs to be done—that certain legitimate national goals must depend on selfless social instincts—but to insist that the government, as society's proxy, should not do these things.

The Reagan administration has slashed federal housing subsidies. Meanwhile, though, it trumpets the virtues of an organization called

Habitat for Humanity, which uses private donations to build subsidized housing for the poor. This group recently opened a development in Plains, Georgia, of all places. The first tenant was a black farm worker named Johnny Murphy, who earns ten dollars a day. Now, does a just society supply subsidized housing to a person like him or not? One might well say that a healthy adult male ought to support himself. That would be principled conservatism. What the Reagan administration seems to be saying is, yes, he ought to get subsidized housing, but no, society is not going to supply it. He'll just have to wait for some Lenny Skutnik to come along.

Here is another example, from a Reagan speech to the National Alliance of Businessmen in October. José Salcido, a Los Angeles man with thirteen children, lost his wife to cancer. Shortly after, he was crushed to death in a freak accident involving his own truck. Let the president pick up the story:

But they were not orphaned by their neighbors or even complete strangers, who immediately began collecting contributions. . . . They also discovered how kind the people of this land can be.

Very nice. But many children are orphaned in ways that do not involve freakish accidents, which get media attention. Are they any less dependent on the kindness of strangers? Why is it an act of generosity to send a small check in a well-publicized case, and an act of oppression to support a government program that will help all such people, publicized or not?

Libertarian purists like Professor Nozick would say that the difference is coercion. A government program forces all taxpayers to be generous, even those who don't feel like it. There is no answer to such purists, except to point out that their logic would have consigned four more people to an icy death on January 13. Many freedom-loving nonpurists are satisfied with the thought that in a democracy, government-imposed generosity cannot for long exceed the will of the majority. You can call

government-style generosity "coercion," or you can call it "collective action." For every Lenny Skutnik there are ten of us who aren't prepared to risk everything but are willing to make a more modest sacrifice if others do the same, so that together we can maintain a certain level of generosity in our society. The process of saying, "I will if you will" is called voting.

Reagan and company may believe that by 1980 the government had exceeded the generous instincts of the majority, and they may be right. But they must have doubts about how deep the New Stinginess runs, or they wouldn't be salving people's consciences with a lot of malapropos about private initiative.

THE LOGIC of collective generosity, which Reagan rejects in the case of government, is precisely the gimmick of United Way, which he celebrates as a model of private initiative. United Way collects money from people in relatively painless amounts and aggregates it for greater effect, at the same time saving them the nuisance of weighing various worthy causes or coming into contact with the beneficiaries of their largesse, which tend to be the most traditional and the most controversial sorts of charities, like the Boy Scouts. The more you think about United Way, in fact, the harder it is to keep in mind the difference between the coercive, bureaucratic, impersonal, stultified social welfare of the federal government, and the voluntary, personal, creative, life-enhancing nature of so-called "private giving." United Way lacks the cumulative coercive power of the government, but it does have ways of making you pledge, most of them involving solicitation by your boss. Stories like TELLER DISMISSED FROM BANK FOR OPPOSING CHARITY DRIVE (The New York Times, November 1981), about a bank teller fired after he refused to cough up for United Way, are never long absent from news columns.

A recent American Enterprise Institute study compared the efficiency of government welfare and United

Way in terms of how many cents of each dollar make it to the intended beneficiaries. The method of investigation was not to go and find out, in the modern style, to take a poll. Fifteen hundred people across the country were asked, and the median answer was that fifty cents of each United Way dollar gets where it's headed, compared with only twenty-five cents of each federal dollar. A handsome chart with two reels illustrates that fifty cents is twice as much as twenty-five cents. President Reagan actually cited this poll in his January 14 speech as a reason to prefer private over public welfare services. Pardon me for challenging the consensus of 1,501 ignorant people, 1,500 of them scientifically selected, but my own little poll of two people—public information officers at United Way and the Department of Health and Human Services—concludes that the government claims an efficiency of 99.5 cents on the dollar (for Aid to Families with Dependent Children), and United Way ninety cents on the dollar. 99.5 is larger than ninety, as the following chart demonstrates:



The main thrust of the President's task force on Private Sector Initiative is to increase philanthropic activity, not by individuals, but by corporations. "I plan to speak out in favor of an offensive response by business every chance that I get," is the curious way C. William Verity, Jr., chairman of Armc Corporation, is head of the president's task force, put it in a recent speech. There is something a bit confused about putting social welfare in order to give business more money to invest, then expecting business to divert money back into social welfare. And there is something very confused indeed about supposing that philanthropy by large business corporations is voluntary on the part of those who are really paying.

Talk about being generous with the people's money (a favorite

conservative taunt about government bureaucrats)—consider Chairman Verity's suggestion of a "statewide governor's honor roll" for companies that give away more than 2 percent of their stockholders' earnings every year. "You know an annual 'Night at the Governor's Mansion' will attract a lot of attention. And for five percenters, they can stay for the weekend." We all want to encourage voluntarism, but the governor of Ohio, where Armc is located, may have second thoughts when more than 100,000 shareholders of this publicly traded corporation descend on his house for the weekend. Or perhaps what Chairman Verity has in mind is that only he—along with other top executives—should be invited to weekend with the governor, on behalf of his shareholders.

In theory, shareholders can vote out the management if they think it's being too generous, but so can taxpayers. Plunging further into theory, a miserly minority shareholder can sell his stock and get out, which a miserly citizen cannot. In practice, there is far less democratic control over philanthropy by corporations than by government. Most corporate stock today is held in trust for pensioners and insurance beneficiaries. These people have no say whatever in how much of their money is given away, or to whom. "Voluntarism is an essential part of our plan to give the government back to the people," Reagan told business executives in October. In fact, by cutting social spending and encouraging corporations to step into the breach (and by doubling the amount of philanthropy they may deduct from their taxes), Reagan is taking social decisions away from the people and giving them to an unelected group of corporate officers.

THE GROWTH of social welfare, according to neoconservative theology, has created a "new class" of bureaucrats, academics, political activists, consultants, and so on, who live as parasites off the productive economy and design government programs for their own benefit rather than for the poor.

It is amusing to think of this "new class" while browsing through the output of the booming voluntarism industry. For example, the perennial John Gardner, founder of Common Cause, is now head of something called "Independent Sector," described as "a national forum for organizations in the voluntary sector." He is on the president's task force, along with George Romney, who once made cars but now heads the "National Center for Citizen Involvement." Another member is Michael S. Joyce, executive director of the John M. Olin Foundation, "specializing in public policy research," before that executive director of the Institute for Educational Affairs, before that executive director of the Goldseker Foundation, "a Baltimore-based foundation concerned with education, housing, medicine, and social welfare," before that assistant director of the Educational Research Council of America, and through it all a member of the Corporate Philanthropy Advisory Committee of the Council on Foundations. President Reagan told the first meeting of his task force, "A wonderful legacy of this task force could be the creation of thousands of local task forces just like yours, one for every town in America. . . ."

According to one of many reports from the Heritage Foundation, "The growth of the voluntary sector is . . . viewed by the Administration as necessary to the effective rebuilding of notions of social obligation . . . that have been eroded by the growth of government." It would be more accurate to say that Reagan's cutbacks of government aid reflect an abandonment of notions of social obligation, if the words "social" and "obligation" have any nuance at all. Reagan himself goes further, telling his task force, "What we're asking you to do is to help rediscover America—not the America bound by the Potomac River but the America beyond the Potomac River." He liked the line so much he repeated it in his January 14 speech. The next time he helicopters by, he might consider the America *in* the Potomac River, and think again. □

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The true story of an innocent journalist trapped inside a public relations firm. by P. J. Corkery

IN 1920, a young press agent named Edward L. Bernays testified in a trial involving his former client Enrico Caruso. Up until that moment Bernays, like his co-practitioners, had been content to describe himself as a "press agent" or "publicity director." But when the court asked him to name his occupation that morning, he said "counsel on public

relations." No one had ever heard that configuration of words before. As a PR gimmick, it worked. The next morning the *New York World's* headline was FIND NEW PROFESSION IN CARUSO SUIT TRIAL.

Bernays then began a campaign—which he continues to this day—to convince people that there is a real profession called "public rela-

tions" and that its practitioners provide a valuable service to society besides getting free publicity for their clients. Bernays's first real triumph came in 1923, when he persuaded the predecessor of the *New York City Yellow Pages* to list "Public Relations" as a category. His greatest triumph came in 1946, when Boston University announced it was creating a "School of Public Relations" and would grant degrees in the new field.

Yet sixty-one years after Bernays's first salvo, newspapers in Los Angeles received the following press release from a PR firm called Hansel & Schwam:

For Immediate Release

Private airplanes interrupted sound recording of "They Call Me Bruce," theatrical feature starring Johnny Yune and Margaux Hemingway in the Newhall California desert Wednesday as pilots flew over to watch.

Unfortunately the martial-arts comedy which Yune is producing must have been too diverting. Result: plane crash in nearby San Fernando with pilot Jan M. Vinson and passenger Andrew M. Carlson killed.

Cast and crew of the Gold Pine Productions film were unaware of the tragedy at the time.

"They Call Me Bruce" also stars Ralph Mauro, Pam Huntington, Keye Luke, Tom Dreesen, Bill Capizzi and Martin Azarova among the 117 actors with speak-



John Brannan

P. J. Corkery now makes an honest living writing in Los Angeles.

ing roles. Screenplay is by David Randolph, Yune, Elliot Hong and Tim Clawson from a story by Yune and Hong. It will be released next summer.

The "profession," clearly, has a lot to go. Last year, I decided to fer it my humble services.

THE waiting room of this large Beverly Hills public relations firm (not Hanson & Schwam) looks as if it has been decorated by a moneyed aristocratic kkrat with an odd interest in TV us. Chintz sofas, Chippendale tables, rifle stands, and other artifacts British country life fill the room. The walls are covered with red silk clking. On them hang nineteenth-century prints side by side with glosses of current celebrities. Cathy Lee Crosby next to the Epsom Derby. The ne Ranger next to Bulwer-Lytton. ny Orlando and Max Beerbohm. een Victoria and Rona Barrett. A copper-topped coffee table are rent copies of *People*, *Parade*, *Us*, *od Housekeeping*, *The Ladies' me Journal*, and the two daily instays of the entertainment industry—the *Hollywood Reporter* and *Starry*.

Staffers roam by. The women, and re are plenty of them at all levels the firm, wear expensive clothes—signer silks, big puffy Nancy Reagan outfits, matching scarves and es, designer bags. Most of the men are small, with the tiny figs and modest proportions that e favored in Beverly Hills businesswomen. But even the bite-sized es walk purposefully; you could : an elbow in the face walking up against one of these striders. ey make little eye contact with angers, though their eyes are constantly surveying the scene. Smiling one is like smiling at the camera the bank; it looks at you and looks yond at the same time. This look considered cosmopolitan.

Top male executives strive for nething British in their appearance. Total-life air conditioning omes, cars, offices) makes it pose for Los Angeles PR men to ar clothing made for people in

cold, damp climates. Tweeds denote class. "Idea men" add what's called "an eccentric touch" to their presentation of self. One account executive, for example, never wears shirts. Instead he wears embroidered sweaters. Even at formal events he can be seen in a tux and a special white turtle-neck sweater embroidered with propeller airplanes flying across his chest. Another executive affects baseball caps. These touches are considered the mark of a creative or unconventional mind.

Beyond the waiting room is a large room occupied by junior staffers who ape the dress of their seniors. These people are called "planters." Each day they write and distribute scores of "items" about the firm's various clients. If an item is printed in a paper, it's considered to have been "planted," and a letter announcing this achievement is sent to the client. One planter concentrates exclusively on the gossip columns of *Variety* and the *Hollywood Reporter*, which together will print twenty-five or so items. Another ten will be picked by other papers. The rest are recycled to gossip columns in papers around the country until someone prints them or age destroys them.

A typical item will announce that "Brush Fire, the vibrant young star of Lookma Television's searing miniseries 'The Rise of the Dutch Republic,' has been named Humanitarian-of-the-Year by the Inflation Club, a philanthropic organization of Los Angeles bankers, for his forceful dramatic presentation of the role of Hans Money, the first bank teller, whose life and loves transformed Holland and the world. He'll receive the traditional plaque and scroll at the club's dinner next week." Contract signings, new projects, and other deals make good items, but awards are the best. That is why Humanitarian-of-the-Year, Man-of-the-Year, Woman-of-the-Year awards are handed out in Hollywood by the hundred, all year long. Public relations firms actively court the sponsors and nominate their clients for prizes.

Near the planters' room is the bookers' room. The walls here don't bear prints of the Ashmolean Museum at sunset or of Ye Olde Cheshire

Cheese. In the bookers' room the walls are made of cork—each wall is a bulletin board. The boards are broken up into segments, each segment representing a different television talk show—"Merv Griffin," "Phil Donahue," "John Davidson," and so on. The names of clients booked on the shows are pinned up on the boards in an appropriate slot. (There's no bulletin board for "Johnny Carson." Johnny calls you. You don't call Johnny.)

The shrewd and well-respected booker is one who can turn a talk show's request for a certain client into a bonanza for other, undesired clients. One nice lady booker in her fifties became a legend by once parlaying one hot client into bookings for three less desirable ones on a big talk show. She received a "job well done" memo from the head of the firm. There's nothing like placing a client on a talk show to convince the client that he's receiving his money's worth for his fee. And the fees here, like those at all major firms, start at \$2,500 a month, with a three-month minimum.

ABOUT half this firm's clients are individual actors and actresses. About a quarter are independent producers who don't have in-house publicity departments for their movies and TV shows. The rest are a varied collection of corporate and individual clients ranging from a champagne maker to aspiring politicians. The champagne maker wants to see his champagne used at prominent local parties, and has provided champagne for charitable events. For his money, he gets references to his product in the society columns. The politicians, and some of the newer stars also, are paying to be introduced around town, to be put on invitation lists.

The planters and bookers have no windows. These are reserved for executives, whose offices overlook the mountains and the greenery of Beverly Hills. The top executives prefer offices decorated to look like a den or living room. Sofas and televisions, yes. Desks and typewriters, no. My office has a typewriter, how-



John Brainerd

ever. I've been hired not to babysit clients but, in the words of the head of the company, to "generate some copy." The firm isn't getting enough of its press releases printed in the daily papers around the country. Using my newspaper experience, I'm to write copy that more closely approximates what editors need.

This is a radical innovation. Although PR people deal with newspapers and magazines daily, most of the staffers—thanks to Edward L. Bernays's campaign to create a separate "profession" with its own credentials—have no experience working for the press. They are hired directly out of school, with their degrees in public relations, and are put to work planting items. After a few years, they are entrusted with the care of clients.

Sometimes, of course, there are different career patterns. As I am settling into my office, an executive I'll call Mr. Duck, because of his voice, waddles in and says, "You'll be sharing this place with another new guy for a while. He's the nephew of a studio boss and wants to get started in the PR game." Almost immediately, the office mate arrives. He can't be older than seventeen, a scrawny kid in jeans, running shoes, and a Hawaiian shirt. Sullen, he sits down at his desk, smokes three or four cigarettes, stares at the walls, and then dials his telephone.

"Get me So-and-so's office," he says, naming his famous uncle, a mogul of years' standing.

"Doris," he says, "is Unk in? I need to talk to him."

In a moment Unk is on the line. This adolescent has done what agents, producers, stars, and lawyers spend days unsuccessfully attempting: getting Unk. Mr. Big on the phone. This is an awesome accomplishment. Studio bosses don't usually take calls from their own issue, let alone from nephews.

"Unk," the nephew says, "this place is kind of formal. I need new clothes."

Unk does some talking and the nephew closes with, "So you'll have Doris call over there. Thanks, Unk!"

He hangs up the phone, gets up, walks to the door, and out.

PROTOCOL is everything, even in the garage under the office. It's 11:30 on a Wednesday morning, and twenty of us are lined up in ten cars, about to drive to a private screening room on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood. We are waiting for the chairman to get into his white Rolls Royce and lead our procession across town. He'll be the first car. The second car is Mr. Movies, who is the president of the movie division of our company. (In other words, he's the account executive in charge of movie producers. But of necessity titles are inflated. If he were merely a vice president, his phone calls wouldn't be returned.) Mr. Duck is the third car. Another executive, named Trixi, is fourth. I'm fifth. We are lined up in the order of our parking spaces. Finally, the chairman descends from the elevator. He is wearing a hunting jacket

with leather rifle patches on the shoulders. Sort of Mr. Chips on hold, except for his California tan.

Mr. Chips backs his car out of the stall, winds up the ramp, and heads north toward Sunset. In our ten-car convoy, only two cars are American made. Most are Mercedeses, BMW with the occasional Volvo. Mr. Movies is driving a Cadillac, and I'm driving a Thunderbird. Why take abuse from valets? Mr. Chips gets a thrill out of these convoys to corporate appointments. All we need are flashing blue lights and flags on our fenders, and we'd be just like Ronald Reagan motorcade, the standard by which stylish travel is judged nowadays in Los Angeles.

The screening room is in another office building, with underground parking. We park and ascend (having avoided all contact with untreaded air), clutching our parking tickets so the screening-room lady can "validate" them with her rubber stamp, a key Los Angeles ritual that means we won't have to pay for parking. The movie producer and director are here, along with a man from one of the major studios, which will distribute the independently made movie.

We take our armchairs. The executives to the rear, the junior down front, close to the screen. Each armchair has a small table and ashtray beside it. On each table is a small light for taking notes. The screening-room lady hands out coffee and bottled water and soda. She also passes around candies in a tin with a picture of Lady Di and Prince Charles on it.

"Shall we watch it?" says Mr. Chips, and the movie begins. Today it is a thriller set in the Middle East. Why some of the victims are murdered is unclear and why the heroes seek the trophy they seek is also unclear. It seems to have something to do with a race against time to decipher some hieroglyphics.

One hundred minutes after it starts the movie ends. What will happen now? Everyone smiles at the client. Mr. Chips breaks the silence. "This is a marvelously interesting movie," he says. "It has some great qualities. It's so difficult to predict in a film like this what the critics will say and

Old Bushmills. It's changing people's minds about Irish Whiskey.



hat the public's reaction will be." his is his all-purpose speech for delivery on such occasions. But before e can finish it, one of our staffers ipes up with, "It's very unusual for e to become sexually aroused in a movie. This one did it for me." Mr. hips hastens the producer, the director, and the distributor out the oor so they won't have to listen o any more about the peculiar responses of his personnel.

"Making this movie must have een a great challenge to you," Mr. hips concludes as the four step out ie door. They are off to have lunch, nd Mr. Chips will return to the ofce at four to discuss how to promote this movie.

At 3:30, Trixi, Mr. Movies, and I ather to "brainstorm" before Mr. hips arrives. Most of the other staffers who were at the movie aren't involved. They drove forty-five minutes ach way and spent two hours at the greenning as window dressing.

"This is a real dog," Mr. Movies ays about the picture.

"Just go for radio contests," says Trixi. Radio promotions are her speciality. Trixi arranges to give tickets o radio stations, which give the tickets away to listeners who call in at ie right moment. The process involves frequent mention of the movie's name. "Teenies are the only ones ho go to movies now," she says—ften.

"We can try and get some of the ctors on talk shows," offers another, reatively. The best idea I have to uggest is that we put up billboards ntirely in hieroglyphics and then lert editors to the presence of these ascrutable texts. As weeks go by, e could translate the boards bit by bit, until they revealed the message: See this movie."

Mr. Chips strolls in. "We can get our pictures a year at \$75,000 a picture from these people," he says, "so t's keep them happy."

We pour out the ideas we've been enveloping.

"No, no, no, no," Mr. Chips says o each one. "The idea is to make the ient happy."

"These ideas won't do it?" a staffer asks.

"Nothing will promote this mov-

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ARCHIVE COLLECTION

*The most comprehensive collection of
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the singers. It's good to know this
music is all here . . . all together . . .
for now and the future."

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their greatest recorded performances

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The musical forerunners of the era—Paul Whiteman, with Bing Crosby and Bix Beiderbecke; Fletcher Henderson, who influenced Benny Goodman and many others; the early big bands of Glen Gray and Fred Waring.

The nostalgic themes of the big bands—Glenn Miller's "Moonlight Serenade" . . . Tommy Dorsey's "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You" . . . Louis Armstrong's "When It's Sleepy Time Down South" . . . Vaughn Monroe's "Racing with the Moon."

The greatest hits of an entire generation—Charlie Barnett's "Cherokee," Duke Ellington's "Take the 'A' Train," Artie Shaw's "Frenesi," Frankie Carle's "Sunrise Serenade," Tommy Dorsey's "Opus One," Eddy Duchin's "Stormy Weather," and Benny Goodman's "Sing, Sing, Sing," with Gene Krupa.

The big band vocalists that audiences loved . . . and still remember. Frank Sinatra with Tommy Dorsey, Peggy Lee with Benny Goodman, Doris Day with Les Brown, Anita O'Day with Gene Krupa, Bob Eberly and Helen O'Connell with Jimmy Dorsey. And many more, including Perry Como, Lena Horne and Ella Fitzgerald.

The ultimate collection of original big band recordings

This is a collection that would be difficult—or impossible—for any individual to assemble. For these selections have been drawn from the archives of all the major record companies . . . and such vintage labels as Brunswick, OKeh, Vocalion, Bluebird and Perfect.

Many of these recordings—like Wayne King's "Melody of Love"—have been unavailable for years. Others are hard to find recordings of early radio broadcasts . . . such as Frank Sinatra's emotional farewell to the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, doing his spectacular rendition of "The Song Is You." Still others were only released on 78s—and never re-issued: Bob Crosby's "Black Zephyr" and Gus Arnheim's "A Peach of a Pair" with Russ Columbo.

In many cases, the panel considered several different versions of the same song, before selecting a particular recording for the collection. Thus, every selection will be a classic performance. An original recording of the era . . . re-captured on records of superior listening quality.

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In keeping with the importance of this collection, special hardbound albums have been designed to house and protect all one hundred proof-quality records.

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Stress record pressing standards, and audio and visual inspection, assure high quality. Ordinary records (left) have static charges that attract dust, causing surface noise. But the special anti-static vinyl used in Franklin Mint records (right) assures clearer sound. Electrostatic meter tests show that the Franklin Mint record has only one-fifth the static charge of ordinary records.

wished to relive the music of that period . . . or if you've only just discovered this unique sound in American popular music . . . this is your opportunity. An opportunity to share and enjoy—with all the members of your family—the unforgettable sound of the big bands.

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The Advisory Panel

COUNT BASIE for more than 40 years, leader of one of the most consistently swinging bands in history.

LES BROWN outstanding writer, arranger and leader of one of the era's most popular dance bands.

DAVE DEXTER, JR. a record producer for 31 years, former *Down Beat* editor and author of *The Jazz Story* and *Plasback*.

LIONEL HAMPTON a leader whose exuberance has inspired musicians and audiences alike for more than five decades.

WOODY HERMAN who continues to be one of the most popular and successful of all leaders—discoverer of many talented musicians.

HARRY JAMES a brilliant trumpeter of both beautiful ballads and rip-roaring swing.

SAMMY KAYE "Mister Swing and Swag" master of the sweet sound—always popular, always danceable.

NEIL McCAFFREY music critic and editor of *American Dance Band Discography* and *The Complete Encyclopedia of Popular Music and Jazz*.

GEORGE T. SIMON music critic, record producer, author of the definitive work on dance bands—*The Big Bands*—and *The Best of the Music Makers*.

RICHARD SUDHALTER jazz critic of *The New York Post*, author of *Bix: Man and Legend*, and a widely respected jazz critic.

JOHN S. WILSON jazz and popular music critic of *The New York Times*, author of *Jazz: The Transition Years*, *The Collector's Jazz: Traditional and Swing*, *The Collector's Jazz: Modern*.



ie," he says. "So let's have a party," he then offers.

"Marvelous idea," says Mr. Movies.

The idea now is to come up with a party to celebrate the premiere of the movie that will be so star-studded and soignée that the client will come back for more even after his movie inevitably flops.

"Too Marvelous!" says Mr. Movies. "It's so *Now*—that's why I like it. It's so 1981!"

Party schemes are tossed around. Finally it's concluded we need a charity to sponsor a celebrity premiere of the movie. After the premiere, hold a party in a museum with an Egyptian motif.

"And a junket," says Mr. Chips. He issues instructions to plan a junket to the Middle East on behalf of the movie. Staffers are told to look for a Middle Eastern government willing to supply air fare and hotels for a group of international celebrities, in exchange for sharing in the publicity. A classy guest list of international celebrities is drawn up. They are to be sounded out about participating.

"See if you can get Sadat and Begin," says Mr. Chips. "And on the flight," he says, "no critics. Just space."

"Space" means writers who will provide entirely positive, uncritical pieces about whatever project we're asking them to write about. They recognize the rules of a junket: We show you a good time, take care of all your expenses, and in turn you write us a story that says nice things about the project. "Space" writers are usually not to be found on big papers or widely circulating magazines, so they don't provide much in the way of wide-ranging publicity. But what they do provide is nice publicity clips to send the client. So if you've got a real dog, hold a party and invite "space."

Mr. Chips leaves to play racquetball. His parting words are, "Make sure everything gets 'activity-ed.'"

To "activity" something is to record an effort on a client's behalf on a special form. Each "activity" is a separate page. One staffer even "activity-s" calls to directory assistance. At some regular interval, all the "ac-

tivity" sheets are bound in a fancy folder and sent off to the client. Should a piece of "activity" result in "space" or "ink," the clipping is also sent along to the client, accompanied by a "merchandising" letter explaining just how this feat was accomplished and how impressive it is.

I'M STILL sharing my office with the mogul's nephew. These days he is wearing three-piece suits. Now he is reading a book published by a client, a self-made millionaire who wants to be vice president of the United States. He wants to be vice president because a psychic on a talk show predicted he could become vice president if he wanted it. Later he ran into one of our executives on a plane and was signed on. For \$75,000, we're helping him to realize his destiny. His book, an autobiography, is supposed to be a source of ideas for publicity about his political and social insights. I've looked at the book. His insights might be suitable for the op-ed page of the *National Enquirer*, if the *National Enquirer* had an op-ed page.

The nephew spends most of his time listening to the radio, or just staring at the wall in silence. He shows enterprise on behalf of only one client, a disco in Hollywood. Just now, as I walk back in the room, he asks for a piece of notepaper. On this he draws a stick figure with a smiling face. Under the figure he scrawls the word "daddy" with the last *d* backward. Then he tapes up the drawing on the wall in front of his desk and walks out of the room.

THERE'S a new file on my desk, involving a charity client (they do charity work, but we don't—they pay full fare).

The charity recently held a lunch for its board of lady advisers—ladies from Beverly Hills and Bel Air. Mr. Chips and Trixi attended on behalf of the firm. In his notes, Mr. Chips has listed the names of the women who were there, where the meal was (a member's home), what the menu was, who prepared the food (a Bev-

erly Hills restaurant), what the floral arrangements were, and what florist did them. He describes the party favors (leather bags from a boutique and matching leather desk sets). He also provides detailed descriptions of the gowns the women wore, writing, with perfect mastery of the incomprehensible jargon of clothes designers: Mrs. So-and-so wore a morning gown by Rudy of Rodeo that featured cahueña shoulders of genuine paco and a sepulveda bag by Pacoima with matching green topanga-skin pumps by El Segundo, and so on. The memo also supplies one-sentence quotes from the ladies about their work.

Attached to this information is a note from Mr. Duck. "Write up for Suzy," says the note. "Send in pouch for New York office tonight." I call Mr. Duck.

"What Suzy am I writing this up for?" I ask.

"Suzy the columnist in the *Daily News*," he says.

"What is it you want me to tell Suzy? What information does Suzy want?"

"Just write up the lunch," he says and hangs up.

Suzy is the highly idiosyncratic chronicler of what passes for American society in the New York *Daily News*. So I write up the information in the notes—the menus, the attendees, the witty remarks, the designer labels, the hopes for the charity—in a fashion that I think will appeal to a busy columnist like Suzy who receives scores of press releases every day. I organize it in good form and send it upstairs with a note saying that if I were an editor or a columnist this is the kind of press release I'd pay attention to.

"I hate it," Mr. Duck says to me five minutes later on the phone.

"What's wrong?" I ask in my weary-pro tone, pencil poised.

"It doesn't sound like Suzy," he says.

"It's not supposed to," I say. "It's for her to use as a resource."

"No!" he says. "You have to write it like Suzy writes."

"No," I say. "You don't understand. It would be an insult to Suzy to write it like that."

"No, you don't understand," he says in an angry voice. "You have to write it just the way the columnist writes it, or she won't use it. We can't call it planting a column for nothing. It won't get printed unless he can throw it right in."

"You're kidding," I say, "canned columns went out with Walter Winchell. No one writes canned columns or columnists anymore. That's thirty years ago."

"Do it my way."

I rewrite the column, using the last six Suzy columns as a guide, and end it back. Nothing from Mr. Duck. This time a memo comes down from Mr. Chips himself, saying job well done.

Around the office I gain a reputation as someone who can mimic a columnist. I try to explain that based on what I've seen, columnists don't accept canned columns anymore, but no avail. I watch Suzy's column. The item, of course, never appears in any form. But my star is rising.

It's Thursday afternoon and I'm in Mr. Duck's office. He has an advance copy of next Sunday's *Calendar*, the hefty entertainment weekly of the *Los Angeles Times*. Advance copies are hard to find; it's a tribute to Mr. Duck's connections that he has one this early in the week. He is reading an interview with a prominent British actor. In this interview, the British actor heaps praise on a client, an American director who has just finished shooting a movie with the British actor. On the set, the actor despised the director and said as much in an interview with a British paper. In *Calendar*, however, the actor has nothing but praise for the director. Mr. Duck is talking to the American director on the phone. After reading him the interview, Mr. Duck says, "Isn't that nice? Didn't he come through for us? Well, that's what we're here for." He hangs up.

"I earned my fee on that one," he says to me, "getting that guy [the British actor] to come across took some doing."

"What did you do?"

"I can't tell," he says.

TRIXI, the movie specialist, calls me in to see her. She has her own celebrity aura and likes to be greeted in restaurants and stores like a star. She works with a number of top celebrity clients on their own personal publicity. When I arrive in her plant-filled den of an office, she is on the phone. She is always on the phone. In keeping with her status, however, she doesn't have a phone. She never has to dial a number or hold a receiver. She has a secretary who covers at her right hand, at a tiny table, to dial and a squawk box to yell and listen through.

Trixi's life is her job. She is about thirty-five and has wrapped her entire existence in her work. Now that she's making big money (\$65,000 and generous expenses), she's recently moved from a small Hollywood apartment to a new condominium in Beverly Hills. When I walk in, she's ordering new phone service for the apartment.

"I don't love that number," Trixi says out loud to the speaker phone. "I don't want that number. I don't

like it. It's wrong and it's bizarre."

The phone-company lady starts to explain. Trixi twirls impatiently in her big chair and shoves across her table a mimeographed five-page biography of a starlet from one of the top-rated jiggle-and-guns shows on network television. Swannie is about to divorce her husband. "We'll need to rewrite Swannie's bio to incorporate the divorce," Trixi says, "and you've got to think up some new lines for her to say about it."

"Huh?" says the squawk box.

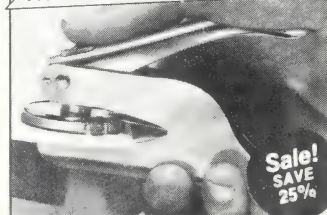
"Put on your supervisor," Trixi says. "I won't accept that number."

The phone company, I gather, is trying to give Trixi a phone number for her new condo that doesn't have the classic Beverly Hills prefix of "27-." Trixi's having none of it. She hasn't worked hard to move to Beverly Hills only to end up with a phone that might as well be from Studio City or El Segundo.

Apparently it's my turn to speak. "We can make it sound like they're both very sad to be divorcing," I say. "But they're both growing as persons with differing needs, and the

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demands of their expanding careers are such that they can't spend much time together and they're awfully glad for the years... ah, the time they've had together."

"That's great," Trixi says. "That's it exactly. We'll put that line out right away." God knows why Swannie and Walter really were divorcing. As she became more famous, he grew more sickly and bitter-looking. She began affecting a punk look and occasionally they'd take swings at each other in restaurants. My guess is that one of their psychiatrists put on his brain-cop cap and blew the whistle.

"Call me back," Trixi says to the squawk box now, "with an acceptable number. I've got other things to do than make sure you phone-company people do your jobs right."

Now Trixi places a call to a wire-service reporter who has wanted to interview Swannie. "I need a reward," she says as the secretary dials. "Lovey, what's doing? You never call me."

The reporter repeats his request for an interview with Swannie.

"Well, I don't know," says Trixi. "She's been awfully busy with her new play. I hear she's just great, just, just great, great, great."

"Well, that's fantastic," says the squawk box. "I'd love to have her talk about that. It'd be a great story."

"Well, don't ask her about her personal life," Trixi says, winking at me. "You know, she's so sad that she and Walter are just too busy now with their own careers to even have the time to get together."

"Oh, I don't want to talk to her about her personal life."

"It's out of the question, lovey. But I'll see what I can do. You'll probably have to go out to her house at the beach. She's just too busy to come into town." Now she calls Swannie.

"Swanniesweetie, I've been working all day to get an interview for you, and I think I've got something set up."

"Does he want to talk about the play?"

"Yes, but you've got to expect some questions about you and Walter. P.J. here will talk to you later and help you organize your thoughts."

"Okay."

"But in the meantime, have your secretary hire a bungalow at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Order Wednesday lunch for three, and we'll do the interview then. I'll be there, so don't worry about anything." Swannie clicks off.

"That's my reward," Trixi says to me. "I'm going to spend next Wednesday by the pool at the Beverly Hills."

She calls the wire-service reporter back and delights him with the news that the interview has been set up.

The telephone company calls back with good news, too. They've located a Beverly Hills number for Trixi that begins with the proper "27-" digits.

"That's much better," Trixi says expansively. "That's a good number. All those other numbers were very bizarre."

"Under what name shall we list the number?" the phone-company lady says, through the speakerphone.

"List the number?" Trixi barks at the squawk box. "I don't want that number in the book. That's to be a Beverly Hills *unlisted* number."

WORD comes in that the Egyptian cultural attaché in Washington is not thrilled with the Middle East thriller, and will not recommend that his government pick up the plane fare and hotel bills for a junket. The junket is dead. That means our major effort on behalf of this movie, for \$75,000, will be to prepare a "press kit." A press kit is a collection of photographs and canned stories about a movie that is sent out to newspapers and magazines. The movie's producer dislikes the stories the firm has fabricated for the kit, and it has fallen to me to try to improve them. He wants more about events during the filming. Unfortunately, not much happens that is even plausibly newsworthy during the filming of a movie. Fortunately, though, on almost every movie set somebody dies, either through an accident or from natural causes. Movie crews can number hundreds of people, so it isn't surprising. When this thriller went on location in Egypt, three people died

—two in a collapse of scaffolding, and one drowned. Later, after shooting, some others died. It strikes me that all this slaughter must have something to do with an ancient curse of disturbed mummies who have vowed to inflict evil on all who distress them. I get to work.

THE PRESS kit is the oldest tool in public relations, yet it is still the industry staple.

You would think (and many PR people apparently do think) that journalism still works the way it did in the 1860s and 1870s when Jerome Eddy, America's first press agent, roamed the country in advance of circuses and traveling shows, supplying canned stories to the local newspapers. In those days, most newspapers lacked editors and reporters. The newspaper reporter, indeed, is an invention not much older than the linotype machine, which came in around 1830. Until then, most newspapers were simply advertising sheets issued by jobbing printers, who were grateful for free copy to fill in the space between ads. According to Richard Maney's memoir, *Fanjare, the Confessions of a Press Agent*, a Boston-based press agent for the Shubert theaters around the turn of the century—one A. Toxen Worm—sent out each week, for each play he represented, "twenty feature stories, page-long blurbs for each Sunday drama section, opening-night and seat-sales announcements, daily paragraphs for drama columnists, fashion stories, women's page stories, suggestions for features and interviews." Most of this material would be printed verbatim.

Ivy Lee was the first press agent to expand beyond the theater. In 1906, some coal-mine operators—a group with a perennial bad press—hired him to plant stories on their behalf. By 1914, Lee had been hired by John D. Rockefeller, another image-problem perennial. In a seminal PR stunt, Lee advised Rockefeller to start handing out dimes to average citizens. This produced hundreds of favorable stories and photographs, and got Lee listed in *Who's Who*.

Press agents were not considered

suitable material for *Who's Who* in those days. There were, however, about a dozen people who identified themselves in that volume as "publicist." Publicists were well-to-do progressives dedicated to municipal reform and other advanced political ideas. They devoted their energies to promoting causes in newspaper articles and on the lecture circuit. Early in this century, before Bernays had invented "public relations," press agents began appropriating the term "publicist" to lend some dignity and panache to their work. The appropriation was so successful that today "publicist" connotes a low-rent public relations person—a press agent, in other words.

In 1922, Walter Lippmann published his book *Public Opinion*, with a long section on the role of press agents. Lippmann wrote, "The development of the publicity man is a clear sign that the facts of modern life do not spontaneously take a shape in which they can be known. They must be given a shape by somebody." Edward L. Bernays read this book, was inspired, devised the term "public relations," and began his crusade to establish that his was a function essential to the operation of the modern world.

Basically, however, it is still a matter of manufacturing press kits, and decided that this was not my life's work.

On the morning of my last day at the firm, I discover that the mogul's nephew is also packing his belongings. This is a surprise. He's been working very hard these last few days, organizing a charity event for the disco client, phoning suppliers, stars, agents, and so on. It sounded as if it would be a great success, with a lot of local TV coverage of the stars donating Christmas toys for the needy at this disco. This uncharacteristic burst of energy has drawn the firm's attention to the fact that the disco was not the firm's client. Nephew was doing this on his own, using the firm's name.

In this final hour, my eye is drawn to the enigmatic stick figure still

taped above his desk. I ask him what it is all about.

"I wanted them to think I had kids. More mature. Just thinking."

"I should do a half hour of that every day," I say.

"It never hurts," he says, and strolls out.

ON MY WAY out, I stop at a press conference we're holding in honor of one of Hollywood's oldest and most beloved stars, a tiresome comedian who makes mildly dirty jokes. The room is full of reporters waiting for interviews. The occasion is some sort of anniversary of his. Many of the reporters are reading a long, eulogistic article about the comedian in that morning's *Los Angeles Times*. I congratulate Trixi, who manages this account, on the *Times* coup.

"How did you do it?" I ask.

"Unfortunately, sweetie," she says, "we had nothing to do with it. It just happened. This old-timer is hot and the *Times* called him up directly. It was just good luck."

The aged comic's manager comes over. He's in a fury. He doesn't want the reporters to have individual interviews with his star. "It's undignified," he says. "Ronnie Reagan doesn't talk to people like that. He makes all the reporters sit inna big room and then he picks out who gets to talk."

Trixi tries to explain the enormous publicity value of private interviews. Each reporter will be flattered by this chance to spend a few minutes with the star. And if a reporter can tell his editor the quotes are exclusive to their paper, the story will get more space and better display.

But the manager insists. "If it's good enough for Ronnie Reagan, it's good enough for us," he says. "We're not going to knock ourselves out like a road company."

In the hallway I run into Mr. Duck. He has the *Los Angeles Times* story in his hand and is walking into the press conference.

"Great ink," I say.

"It sure is," he says, "and I planted it myself." □

HARPER'S/MARCH 1982

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WHAT ARIA COOKING?

Jackie Kennedy's seafood-and-potato-chip casserole, and other scoops from the great American buffet.

by Susan Dooley

NOT LONG ago a woman wrote President Reagan to protest some of his budget cuts. In response, the White House sent her a glossy photograph of Ronald and Nancy Reagan and a recipe for a crabmeat-and-artichoke casserole. An odd answer, and one the president came to regret. When the press delightedly pointed out that the ingredients for such a casserole would cost more than twenty dollars, the White House did a quick gastronomic about-face and revealed that the president's favorite recipe is actually macaroni and cheese.

One may well wonder, when there are 3,500 cookbooks in print, why the White House feels the need to tell people how to bake noodles. Is this not another example of encroaching government interference in family life? But the Reagans, for the most part, are not forcing their culinary tastes on an unappreciative public; they are responding to demand. The White House regularly receives so many requests for recipes that in recent years each administration has had some printed up on little cards, from Mamie Eisenhower's fudge to Lady Bird Johnson's spoon bread. (The Reagans' crabmeat-and-artichoke recipe is printed in elegant blue on heavy white stock. Either due to haste, or in a correlative spirit of economy, the macaroni-and-cheese dish is cheaply run off in black on a flimsy index card.)

There is apparently a great hunger in this country if not for the food off other people's tables, be they ce-

Susan Dooley writes a column on entertaining for the Washington Post.



lebrities or neighbors, then at least for the recipes used to prepare that food. This hunger provides a market not just for presidential recipe cards but also for "good lady" cookbooks—recipe collections put out by the good ladies of some civic association or church or sorority or garden club or cultural auxiliary to raise money for a worthy cause.

The file on American cookery at the Library of Congress is full of these works, tucked in among such unrelated but nevertheless fascinating tomes as *Samoan House Building*, *Cooking and Tattooing*, and *Cooking People* (recipes from, not for preparation of, *homo sapiens*). Taken together, good lady cookbooks prob-

ably offer the truest expression of American cuisine, immortalizing Fanny's fried chicken and Minnie's meatballs. So the good ladies are performing a valuable service, beyond raising money for the new hospital wing or a bed of petunias on the village green, when they come out with *Kitchen Auditions: A Cookbook for Bands and Cheering Squads; Heavenly Cooking from Space City, U.S.A.*; and *What Aria Cooking?* This last, published by the San Francisco Opera Association, includes a recipe for Die Meistersalad. Not to be outdone, the Junior Committee for the Cleveland Orchestra has published *Bach's Lunch and Bach For Mom*. And don't forget *Cuisine d'Amor*, put out (most inappropriately, one feels) by the Catholic Daughters of America. The Florence Crittenton home for unwed mothers, the Culver Mothers' Club for wed ones, the Daughters of the American Revolution, all have visited their larder and returned with news on what is really eat.

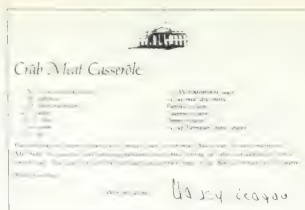
The menus of the rich have passed into history. Extravaganzas like the horseback dinner held at the turn of the century, where thirty members of the New York Riding Club were served a fourteen-course meal while mounted on their steeds, survive in footnotes to the Gilded Age. But these records from the middle class have proved very perishable.

"The great fascination of the early regional cookery books for collectors and local historians is the elusiveness. Seldom copyrighted, sold locally, usually to acquaintances, the ladies whose recipes appear, the

“The recipes . . . reflect the cooking fashions of the period in various parts of the United States more accurately than the standard work by professional authors. . . . [They] chronicle the transition from wood-burning stove to gas and electric appliances, and the development of refrigeration and commercially canned or pre-packaged foods. Roast snipe and woodcock, quail and pheasant, barbecued suckling pig, suet and huckleberry puddings, calf’s head soup and calf’s foot gelatin, rabbit and squirrel pies, brandied peaches and homemade wines: all have a place in the cook books published in the small towns of America before the First World War.” Cook writes,

THE COOKBOOKS do indeed chronicle the rise of pre-packaged foods, in particular the astonishing number of things people began to encase in Jell-O. A Lime Jello Salad from the Wellesley Teachers Association's cookbook, *Cooking With Class*, is a classic of the genre, calling as it does for lime Jell-O (of course), half a pound of miniature marshmallows, crushed pineapple, cottage cheese, maraschino cherries, pecans, etc. Another recipe is a salad that calls for cherry gelatin and red cinnamon candies.

The early good lady cookbooks late themselves not only by recipes



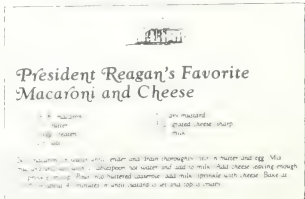
that begin, "Take one gallon fresh pig's blood," but also by material such as this "Recipe for a New Bride on How to Keep a Man":

Be careful not to beat him as you would an egg or cream, for beating will make him tough and apt to froth at the mouth. . . . Do not soak him in liquor. . . . Need him, need his dough and save some for the little dumplings.

The little dumplings grew up to put out their own cookbooks, and nowhere under more trying circumstances than the one published in 1949 by The American Women in Blockaded Berlin. *Operation Vütkes* included a recipe for Block-Ade that probably Blocked Out the whole experience. After meeting the needs of nutrition with two cans of fruit cocktail and throwing in a cup of sugar for sweetening, the ladies got down to the real stuff: two bottles of cognac, six bottles of red wine, six bottles of white wine, and six bottles of champagne.

Operation Vittles, like other fundraising cookbooks, provides historical notes not to be found in the standard texts:

"Little Vittles" is what we now call the extra-curricular project of one pilot who began dropping candy, via handkerchief parachutes to the children watching the planes landing at Tempelhof. . . . There's an unwritten law that



says "For children only!" This was ignored by one grown-up who refused the children entrance to his garden where one little parachute lay. He was immediately and thoroughly dealt with by 200 assorted German parents and children.

The ladies also tell of how, when the blockade cut their electricity to only a few hours a day, they took to finishing the cooking process by tucking the hot pots under the bed-covers. Even more ingenious was the journey of a leg of lamb that one housewife cooked in borrowed ovens, moving from one sector to another to take advantage of the staggered electricity. It took, she proudly claims, a record twenty-two hours.

Recipes from the exotic and the famous are always prized by the good ladies (one reason why White House recipes are always in demand). And nowhere will you find a more intriguing glimpse into the kitchens of the famous and the foreign than in Washington, D.C. Who could say nay when offered the Lips of the Beauty, a confection contributed by Madame Urguplu of the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey to *As You Like It*, published in 1959 by Washington's Seton Guild? But if the allure of Madame Urguplu's recipe lay in its name, in most instances the allure is in the name of the contributor. In 1890, *The Washington Cook Book—Statesmen's Dishes* opened its pages with Mrs. Benjamin Harrison's recipe for Clear Soup, later revealing the secrets of her fish chowder, sausage rolls, and fig pudding.

By 1959 and *As You Like It*, past and potential First Ladies were crowding each other off the page: Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt's Huckleberry Pudding, Mrs. Eisenhower's Sugar Cookies, Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson's Wheaties Coconut Cookies, and Mrs. Richard Nixon's Shrimp Supper. Mrs. Nixon's shrimp finished up with an original touch: it was topped with crushed potato chips.

And here's a coincidence for you: three years later, when Jacqueline Kennedy was solicited for a recipe for the *Jango Mess Kit*, put out by the Junior Army-Navy Guild Orga-



WHAT ARIA COOKING?

nization, she offered her Baked Seafood Casserole, which listed among its ingredients, "Two cups coarsely chopped potato chips." Will glamour and cultivation like that ever return to the White House?

The *Mess Kit* is a classic. Besides Jackie's potato-chip casserole, it shares with us J. Edgar Hoover's recipe for Savory Lemon Pats. It also contains the definitive example of how some women, trapped by a request for a recipe, can make a great piece of work out of cooking a hotdog. One's heart goes out to Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, coming home from a hard day at war in time to observe the efforts of his wife, Lydia, to produce her specialty, "Not-So-Lowly Frankfurter Sandwiches":

Split open completely 6 frankfurter rolls.

Put goodly amount of butter in a large heavy skillet.

Cut open 6 frankfurters and fry lightly in butter on both sides. Puncture, but they will curl anyhow! [The exclamation is from the beleaguered Mrs. Taylor.] Remove. Brow [sic] cut sides of rolls slightly in hot butter in skillet. Put frankfurters in hot rolls, spread with little mustard if desired and serve immediately.

ALMOST every good lady collection contains at least one attempt to reinvent the hotdog, be it Hot Dog Toasties or Wiener Beans, but some celebrities have brought the same knack to other dishes. Here are Martina Navratilova's ingredients for Brat Pie, given to *A Taste of Palm Springs*, published in 1979 to benefit Desert Hospital: two cartons Dannon fruit yogurt, one small (eight-ounce) carton Cool Whip, one graham-cracker pie shell. After telling the reader to fold the first two ingredients together and pour them into the third, Ms. Navratilova completes her culinary obligation by suggesting that in decorating the pie the reader should "Use imagination." Billie Jean King's recipe for "B.J.K.'s Nuts To You," in the same collection, combines one package instant pistachio pudding mix, one large can

crushed pineapple (undrained), one cup miniature marshmallows, one cup chopped walnuts, and one large carton Cool Whip.

In perhaps an excess of political enthusiasm, a group from Illinois published an entire volume devoted to the recipes of the wife of (now former) Illinois Senator Adlai Stevenson, and the Stevenson family's eating habits. In *Adlai's Nancy—Her Potpourri*, "compiled and published by Adlai's and Nancy's Friends," we learn that if we are ever to invite the pair for the evening, it is best to remember that "Neither Ad, the children nor I can imagine living without cheese." And if the ex-senator should drop by alone, well, it is a relief to know that "ham and Swiss cheese on rye is Ad's sandwich preference."

Not all the jokes in the good lady collections are inadvertent. The following is the recipe for Elephant Stew From the Galleys of Nantucket put out by the First Congregational Church in 1969:



1 medium sized elephant

Brown gravy to cover

Salt and pepper

2 rabbits (optional)

Cut elephant into bite-sized pieces. This should take about two months. Add gravy and cook about 4 weeks at 465 degrees. This will serve 3,000 people. If more are expected, two rabbits may be added, but do this only if necessary, as most people do not like to find hare in their stew.

Occasionally men get into the act, as did the gentleman contributor to *Bach's Lunch* who timed his barbecued pork chops by martinis. One martini and it was time to turn them, two martinis and they (and the cook) were done.

The Junior League of America is the IBM of fund-raising cookbooks. Late off the mark (the first Junior League cookbook that national headquarters has any record of was published in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1922), they have been making up for it ever since. Cookbooks are second only to the thrift shops as a source of funds for the Junior League, earning a million dollars in 1980-81. From *A Taste of Oregon* to Wichita's Sun-

flower Sampler to Applehood and *Mother Pie* from upstate New York, the books reflect a growing sophistication about food. There are still recipes that demand the presence of miniature marshmallows bobbing about in a sea of Jell-O, but they are being edged out by others that call for fresh ingredients and some dedication to the arts of cooking and eating.

Although it is difficult to moul the passing of canned peas, it would be a shame if the cookbooks were to lose their regional flavor. The spirit of Texas stomps its way off the page in the Junior League of Austin cookbook, *The Collection*, where you will find a recipe for a candy called Self-Made Millionaires, and also recipes for Aggression Cookies, Opuke Asparagus, and Machismo Barbecue Sauce.

IN *The Parish House Cookbook*, put out by the women of Hugger's Church, Bridgetown, Virginia, in 1959, the recipes are handwritten. Mrs. Bell's turnover will be forever a mystery because Mrs. Bell's unreadable writing, but neater hands have transcribed the recipes for Sweet Potato Biscuit, Baked Smithfield Ham, Roast Wild Duck, Turnip Greens, Corn Pudding and Scalloped Oysters.

How can we resist Miss Florence Cake, when a note following the recipe explains that "This is an old recipe, served in the gay nineties by Mrs. Lindley of Bell Grove Plantation near Eastville and more recent at Brownsville by Esther Dick Bradley."

You can hear the porch door slam see the gently rounded ladies standing at their stoves, flour sifted smudges of white over their aprons and patching their arms as they prepare to serve the cause, offering recipes for the food they do so well branded peaches—"the best brand to use for these is 'the best brandy'"—sand tarts and fruit cake sugar and spice cookies, candy apple, plum pudding and trifle, shortbread, bitter orange marmalade, watermelon pickle...

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IS NATURE TOO GOOD FOR US?

It's not much of an environment if you can't get in.

by William Tucker

PROBABLY nothing has been more central to the environmental movement than the concept of wilderness. "In wilderness is the preservation of the world," wrote Thoreau, and environmental writers and speakers have intoned his message repeatedly. Wilderness, in the environmental pantheon, represents a particular kind of sanctuary in which all true values—that is, all nonhuman values—are repositied. Wildernesses are often described as "temples," "churches," and "sacred ground"—refuges for the proposed "new religion" based on environmental consciousness. Carrying the religious metaphor to the extreme, one of the most famous essays of the environmental era holds the Judeo-Christian religion responsible for "ecological crisis."

The wilderness issue also has a political edge. Since 1964, long-standing preservation groups like the Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club have been pressuring conservation agencies like the National Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management to put large tracts of their holdings into permanent "wilderness designations," countering the "multiple use" concept that was one of the cornerstones of the Conservation Era of the early 1900s.

Preservation and conservation groups have been at odds since the end of the last century, and the rift between them has been a major controversy of environmentalism. The leaders of the Conservation Movement—most notably Theodore Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot, and John Wesley Powell—called for rational, efficient development of land and other natural re-

sources: multiple use, or reconciling competing uses of land, and also "highest use," or forfeiting more immediate profits from land development for more lasting gains. Preservationists, on the other hand, the followers of California woodsman John Muir, have advocated protecting land in its natural state, setting aside tracts and keeping them inviolate. "Wilderness area" battles have become one of the hottest political issues of the day, especially in western states—the current "Sagebrush Revolt" comes to mind—where large quantities of potentially commercially usable land are at stake.

THE TERM "wilderness" generally connotes mountains, trees, clear streams, rushing waterfalls, grasslands, or parched deserts, but the concept has been institutionalized and has a careful legal definition as well. The one given by the 1964 Wilderness Act, and that most environmentalists favor, is that wilderness is an area "where man is a visitor but does not remain." People do not "leave footprints there," wilderness exponents often say. Wildernesses are, most importantly, areas in which *evidence of human activity is excluded*; they need not have any particular scenic, aesthetic, or recreational value. The values, as environmentalists usually say, are "ecological"—which means, roughly translated, that natural systems are allowed to operate as free from human interference as possible.

William Tucker has written for Harper's and many other publications.

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The concept of excluding human activity is not to be taken lightly. One of the major issues in wilderness areas has been whether or not federal agencies should fight forest fires. The general decision has been that they should not, except in cases where other lands are threatened. The federal agencies also do not fight the fires with motorized vehicles, which are prohibited in wilderness areas except in extreme emergencies. Thus in recent years both the National Forest Service and the National Park Service have taken to letting forest fires burn unchecked, to the frequent alarm of tourists. The defense is that many forests require periodic leveling by fire in order to make room for new growth. There are some pine trees, for instance, whose cones will break open and scatter their seeds only when burned. This theoretical justification has won some converts, but very few in the timber companies, which bridle at watching millions of board-feet go up in smoke when their own "harvesting" of mature forests has the same effect in clearing the way for new growth and does less damage to forest soils.

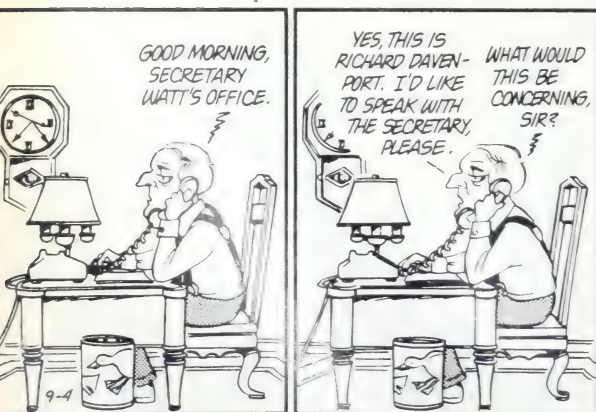
The effort to set aside permanent wilderness areas on federal lands began with the National Forest Service in the 1920s. The first permanent reservation was in the Gila National Forest in New Mexico. It was set aside by a young Forest Service officer named Aldo Leopold, who was later to write *A Sand County Almanac*, which has become one of the bibles of the wilderness movement. Robert Marshall, another Forest Service officer, continued the program, and by the 1950s nearly 14 million of the National Forest System's 186 million acres had been administratively designated wilderness preserves.

Leopold and Marshall had been disillusioned

by one of the first great efforts at "game management" under the National Forest Service, carried out in the Kaibab Plateau, just north of the Grand Canyon. As early as 1906 federal officials began a program of "predator control" to increase the deer population in the area. Mountain lions, wolves, coyotes, and bobcats were systematically hunted and trapped by game officials. By 1920, the program appeared to be spectacularly successful. The deer population, formerly numbering 4,000, had grown to almost 100,000. But it was realized too late that it was the range's limited food resources that would threaten the deer's existence. During two severe winters, in 1924-26, 60 percent of the herd died, and by 1939 the population had shrunk to only 10,000. Deer populations (unlike human populations) were found to have no way of putting limits on their own reproduction. The case is still cited as the classic example of the "boom and bust" disequilibrium that comes from thoughtless intervention in an ecological system.

The idea of setting aside as wilderness areas larger and larger segments of federally controlled lands began to gain more support from the old preservation groups. In part, this came from preservationists' growing realization, during the 1950s, that they had not won the battle during the Conservation Era, and that the national forests were not parks that would be protected forever from commercial activity.

Pinchot's plan for practicing "conservation" in the western forests was to encourage a partnership between the government and large industry. In order to discourage overcutting and destructive competition, he formulated a plan that would promote conservation activities among the larger timber companies while placing large segments of the western forests under federal control. It was a classic case of "market restriction," carried out by the joint efforts of larger businesses and government. Only the larger companies, Pinchot reasoned, could generate the profits that would allow them to cut their forest holdings slowly so that the trees would have time to grow back. In order to ensure these profit margins, the National Forest Service would hold most of its timber lands out of the market for some time. This would hold up the price of timber and prevent a rampage through the forests by smaller companies trying to beat small profit margins by cutting everything in sight. Then, in later years, the federal lands would gradually be worked into the "sustained yield" cycles, and timber rights put up for sale. It was when the national forests finally came up for cutting in the 1950s that the old preservation groups began to react.



The battle was fought in Congress. The 1960 Multiple Use and Sustained Yield Act tried to reaffirm the principles of the Conservation Movement. But the wilderness groups had their day in 1964 with the passing of the Wilderness Act. The law required all the federal land-management agencies—the National Forest Service, the National Park Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service—to review all their holdings, in mind that “wilderness” now constituted a valid alternative in the “multiple use” concept—even though the concept of wilderness is essentially a rejection of the idea of multiple use. The Forest Service, with 190 million acres, and the Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service, each with about 35 million acres, were all given twenty years to start designating wilderness areas. At the time, only 14.5 million acres of National Forest System and were in wilderness designations.

THE RESULTS have been mixed. The wilderness concept appears valid if it is recognized for what it is—an attempt to create what are essentially “ecological museums” in scenic and biologically significant areas of these lands. But “wilderness,” in the hands of environmentalists, has become an all-purpose tool for stopping economic activity as well. This is particularly crucial now because of the many mineral and energy resources available on western lands that environmentalists are trying to push through as wilderness designations. The original legislation specified that lands were to be surveyed or valuable mineral resources before they were put into wilderness preservation. Yet with so much land being reviewed at once, these inventories have been sketchy at best. And once land is locked up as wilderness, it becomes illegal even to explore it for mineral or energy resources.

Thus the situation in western states—where the federal government still owns 68 percent of the land, counting Alaska—has in recent years become a race between mining companies trying to prospect under severely restricted conditions, and environmental groups trying to lock the doors to resource development for good. This kind of permanent preservation—the antithesis of conservation—will probably have enormous effects on our future international trade in energy and mineral resources.

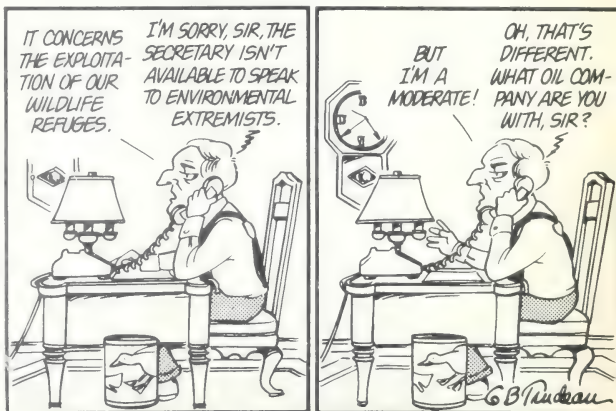
At stake in both the national forests and the bureau of Land Management holdings are what are called the “roadless areas.” Environmentalists call these lands “de facto wilderness,” and say that because they have not yet

been explored or developed for resources they should not be explored and developed in the future. The Forest Service began its Roadless Area Resources Evaluation (RARE) in 1972, while the Bureau of Land Management began four years later in 1976, after Congress brought its 174 million acres under jurisdiction of the 1964 act. The Forest Service is studying 62 million roadless acres, while the BLM is reviewing 24 million.

In 1974 the Forest Service recommended that 15 million of the 50 million acres then under study be designated as permanent wilderness. Environmental groups, which wanted much more set aside, immediately challenged the decision in court. Naturally, they had no trouble finding flaws in a study intended to cover such a huge amount of land, and in 1977 the Carter administration decided to start over with a “RARE II” study, completed in 1979. This has also been challenged by a consortium of environmental groups that include the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Natural Resources Defense Council. The RARE II report also recommended putting about 15 million acres in permanent wilderness, with 36 million released for development and 11 million held for further study. The Bureau of Land Management is not scheduled to complete the study of its 24 million acres until 1991.

The effects of this campaign against resource development have been powerful. From 1972 to 1980, the price of a Douglas fir in Oregon increased 500 percent, largely due to the delays in timber sales from the national forests because of the battles over wilderness areas. Over the decade, timber production from the national forests declined slightly, putting far more pressure on the timber industry's

“Wilderness,” in the hands of environmentalists, has become an all-purpose tool for stopping economic activity.”



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own lands. The nation has now become an importer of fuels, despite the vast resources on federal lands. In 1979, environmentalists succeeded in pressuring Congress into setting aside 550,000 acres in Idaho as the Sawtooth Wilderness and National Recreational Area. A resource survey, which was not completed until after the congressional action, showed that the area contained an estimated billion dollars' worth of molybdenum, zinc, silver, and gold. The same tract also contained a potential source of cobalt, an important mineral for which we are now dependent on foreign sources for 97 percent of what we use.

Perhaps most fiercely contested are the energy supplies believed to be lying under the geological strata running through Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana just east of the Rockies, called the Overthrust Belt. Much of this land is still administered by the Bureau of Land Management for multiple usage. But with the prospect of energy development, environmental groups have been rushing to try to have these high-plains areas designated as wilderness areas as well (cattle grazing is still allowed in wilderness tracts). On these lands, permanently withdrawn from commercial use, mineral exploration will be allowed to continue until 1983. Any mines begun by then can continue on a very restricted basis. But the exploration in "roadless areas" is severely limited, in that in most cases there can be no roads constructed (and no use of off-road vehicles) while exploration is going on. Environmentalists have argued that wells can still be drilled and test mines explored using helicopters. But any such exploration is likely to be extraordinarily expensive and ineffective. Wilderness restrictions are now being drawn so tightly that people on the site are not allowed to leave their sacrament in the area.

Impossible paradises

WHAT is the purpose of all this? The standard environmental argument is that we have to "preserve these last few wild places before they all disappear." Yet it is obvious that something more is at stake. What is being preserved is a view of the world in which human activity is defined as "bad" and natural conditions are defined as "good." What is being preserved is evidently much more than "ecosystems." What is being preserved is

an image of wilderness as a semisacred place beyond humanity's intrusion.

It is instructive to consider how environmentalists themselves define the wilderness. David Brower, former director of the Sierra Club, wrote in his introduction to Paul Erlich's *The Population Bomb* (1968):

Whatever resources the wilderness still hold would not sustain [man] in the old habit of grazing and robbing without limits. Wilderness could, however, provide answers for questions he had not yet learned how to ask. He could predict that the day of creation was not over, that there would be water men, and they would thank him for leaving the source of those answers. Wilderness would remain part of his geography of hope, as Wallace Stegner put it, and could, merely because wilderness endured on the planet, prevent man's world from becoming a cage.

The wilderness, he suggested, is a source of peace and freedom. Yet setting wilderness aside for the purposes of solitude doesn't always work very well. Environmentalists have discovered this over and over again, much to their chagrin. Every time a new "untouched paradise" is discovered, the first thing everyone wants to do is visit it. By their unit enthusiasm to find these "sanctuaries," people bring the "cage" of society with them. Very quickly it becomes necessary to erect bars to keep people out—which is exactly what most of the "wilderness" legislation has been about.

In 1963, for example, the Sierra Club published a book on the relatively "undiscovered paradise" of Kauai, the second most western island in the Hawaiian chain. It wasn't long before the island had been overrun with tourists. When *Time* magazine ran a feature on Kauai in 1973, one unhappy islander lamented: "We're hoping the shortages of jet fuel will stop around and keep people away from here." The age of environmentalism has also been marked by the near overrunning of popular national parks like Yosemite (which now has a full-time jail), intense pressure on woodland recreational areas, full bookings two or three years in advance for raft trips through the Grand Canyon, and dozens of other spectacles of people crowding into isolated areas to get away from it all. Environmentalists are often critical of these inundations, but the must recognize that they have at least contributed to them.

I am not arguing against wild things, scenic beauty, pristine landscapes, and scenic pres-

*This article is excerpted from William Tucker's forthcoming book, *Progress and Paradise: America in the Age of Environmentalism*, to be published by Doubleday in May. Copyright © 1982 by William Tucker.*

vation. What I am questioning is the argument that wilderness is a value against which every other human activity must be judged, and that human beings are somehow unworthy of the landscape. The wilderness has been equated with freedom, but there are many different ideas about what constitutes freedom. In the Middle Ages, the saying was that "city air makes a man free," meaning that the harsh social burdens of medieval feudalism vanished once a person escaped into the heady anonymity of a metropolitan community. When city planner Jane Jacobs, author of *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, was asked by an interviewer if "overpopulation" and "crowding into large cities" weren't making social prisoners of us all, her simple reply was: "Have you ever lived in a small town?"

IT MAY SEEM unfair to itemize the personal idiosyncrasies of people who feel comfortable only in wilderness, but it must be remembered that the environmental movement has been shaped by many people who literally spent years of their lives living in isolation. John Muir, the founder of the National Parks movement and the Sierra Club, spent almost ten years living alone in the Sierra Mountains while learning to be a trail guide. David Brower, who headed the Sierra Club for over a decade and later broke with it to found the Friends of the Earth, also spent years as a mountaineer. Gary Snyder, the poet laureate of the environmental movement, has lived much of his life in wilderness isolation and has also spent several years in a Zen monastery. All these people far outdid Thoreau in their desire to get a little perspective on the world. There is nothing reprehensible in this, and the literature and philosophy that emerge from such experiences are often admirable. But it seems questionable to me that the ethic that comes out of this wilderness isolation—and the sense of ownership of natural landscapes that inevitably follows—can serve as the basis for a useful national philosophy.

That frontier spirit

THE AMERICAN frontier is generally agreed to have closed down physically in 1890, the year the last Indian Territory of Oklahoma was opened for settlement. After that, the Conservation Movement arose quickly to protect the remaining resources and wilderness from heedless stripping and development. Along with this came a significant psychological change in the na-

tional character, as the "frontier spirit" diminished and social issues attracted greater attention. The Progressive Movement, the Social Gospel among religious groups, Populism, and Conservation all arose in quick succession immediately after the "closing of the frontier." It seems fair to say that it was only after the frontier had been settled and the sense of endless possibilities that came with open spaces had been constricted in the national consciousness that the country started "growing up."

Does this mean the new environmental consciousness has arisen because we are once again "running out of space"? I doubt it. Anyone taking an airplane across almost any part of the country is inevitably struck by how much greenery and open territory remain, and how little room our towns and cities really occupy. The amount of standing forest in the country, for example, has not diminished appreciably over the last fifty years, and is 75 percent of what it was in 1620. In addition, as environmentalists constantly remind us, trees are "renewable resources." If they continue to be handled intelligently, the forests will always grow back. As farming has moved out to the Great Plains of the Middle West, many eastern areas that were once farmed have reverted back to trees. Though mining operations can permanently scar hillsides and plains, they are usually very limited in scope (and as often as not, it is the roads leading to these mines that environmentalists find most objectionable).

It seems to me that the wilderness ethic has actually represented an attempt psychologically to reopen the American frontier. We have been desperate to maintain belief in unlimited, uncharted vistas within our borders, a preoccupation that has eclipsed the permanent shrinking of the rest of the world outside. Why else would it be so necessary to preserve such huge tracts of "roadless territory" simply because they are now roadless, regardless of their scenic, recreational, or aesthetic values? The environmental movement, among other things, has been a rather backward-looking effort to recapture America's lost innocence.

The central figure in this effort has been the backpacker. The backpacker is a young, unprepossessing person (inevitably white and upper middle class) who journeys into the wilderness as a passive observer. He or she brings his or her own food, treads softly, leaves no litter, and has no need to make use of any of the resources at hand. Backpackers bring all the necessary accouterments of civilization with them. All their needs have been met by the society from which they seek temporary release. The backpacker is freed from

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the need to support himself in order to enjoy the aesthetic and spiritual values that are made available by this temporary removal from the demands of nature. Many dangers—raging rivers or precipitous cliffs, for instance—become sought-out adventures.

Yet once the backpacker runs out of supplies and starts using resources around him—cutting trees for firewood, putting up a shelter against the rain—he is violating some aspect of the federal Wilderness Act. For example, one of the issues fought in the national forests revolves around tying one's horse to a tree. Purists claim the practice should be forbidden, since it may leave a trodden ring around the tree. They say horses should be hobbled and allowed to graze instead. In recent years, the National Forest Service has come under pressure from environmental groups to enforce this restriction.

WILDERNESSES, then, are essentially parks for the upper middle class. They are vacation reserves for people who want to rough it—with the assurance that few other people will have the time, energy, or means to follow them into the solitude. This is dramatically highlighted in one Sierra Club book that shows a picture of a professorial sort of individual backpacking off into the woods. The ironic caption is a quote from Julius Viancour, an official of the Western Council of Lumber and Sawmill Workers: "The inaccessible wilderness and primitive areas are off limits to most laboring people. We must have access..." The implication for Sierra Club readers is:

"What do these beer-drinking, gun-toting working people want to do in our woods?"

This class-oriented vision of wilderness as an upper-middle-class preserve is further illustrated by the fact that most of the opposition to wilderness designations comes not from industry but from owners of off-road vehicles. In most northern rural areas, snowmobiles are now regarded as the greatest invention since the automobile, and people are ready to fight rather than stay cooped up all winter in their houses. It seems ludicrous to them that snowmobiles (which can't be said even to endanger the ground) should be restricted from vast tracts of land so that the occasional city visitor can have solitude while hiking past on snow shoes.

The recent Boundary Waters Canoe Area controversy in northern Minnesota is an excellent example of the conflict. When the tract was first designated as wilderness in 1964, Congress included a special provision that allowed motorboats into the entire area. By the mid-1970s, outboards and inboards were roaring all over the wilderness, and environmental groups began asking that certain portions of the million-acre preserve be set aside exclusively for canoes. Local residents protested vigorously, arguing that fishing expeditions via motorboats, contributed to their own recreation. Nevertheless, Congress eventually excluded motorboats from 670,000 acres to the north.

A more even split would seem fairer. I should certainly be possible to accommodate both forms of recreation in the area, and there is as much to be said for canoeing in solitude as there is for making rapid expeditions by powerboat. The natural landscape is not likely to suffer very much from either form of recreation. It is not absolute "ecological" value that are really at stake, but simply different tastes in recreation.

Not entirely natur

AT BOTTOM, then, the mystique of the wilderness has been little more than a revival of Rousseau's Romanticist about the "state of nature." The notion that "only in wilderness are human beings truly free," a credo of environmentalists, is merely a variation on Rousseau's dictum that "man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains." According to Rousseau, only society could enslave people, and only in the "state of nature" was the "noble savage"—the preoccupation of so many early explorers—a fulfilled human being.



The "noble savage" and other indigenous peoples, however, have been carefully excised from the environmentalists' vision. Where environmental efforts have encountered primitive peoples, these indigenous residents have often proved one of the biggest problems. One of the most bitter issues in Alaska is the efforts of environmental groups to restrict Indians in their hunting practices.

At the same time, few modern wilderness enthusiasts could imagine, for example, the experience of the nineteenth-century artist

Ross Browne, who wrote in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* after visiting the Arizona territories in 1864:

Sketching in Arizona is...rather a ticklish pursuit....I never before traveled through a country in which I was compelled to pursue the fine arts with a revolver strapped around my body, a double-barreled shot-gun lying across my knees, and half a dozen soldiers armed with Sharpe's carbines keeping guard in the distance. Even with all the safeguards...I am free to admit that on occasions of this kind I frequently looked behind to see how the country appeared in its rear aspect. An artist with an arrow in his back may be a very picturesque object...but I would rather draw him on paper than sit for the portrait myself.

Wilderness today means the land after the Indians have been cleared away but before the settlers have arrived. It represents an attempt to hold that particular moment forever frozen in time, that moment when the visionary American settler looked out on the land and imagined it as an empty paradise, waiting to be molded to our vision.

In the absence of the noble savage, the environmentalist substitutes himself. The wilderness, while free of human dangers, becomes a kind of basic-training ground for upper-middle-class values. Hence the rise of "survival" rous, where college kids are taken out into the woods for a week or two and let loose to prove their survival instincts. No risks are spared on these expeditions. Several people have died on them, and a string of lawsuits as already been launched by parents and survivors who didn't realize how seriously these survival courses were being taken.

The ultimate aim of these efforts is to test upper-middle-class values against the natural environment. "Survival" candidates cannot hunt, kill, or use much of the natural resources available. The true test is whether their zero-degree sleeping bags and dried-food kits prove equal to the hazards of the tasks. What happens is not necessarily related to nature. One

could as easily test survival skills by turning a person loose without money or means in New York City for three days.

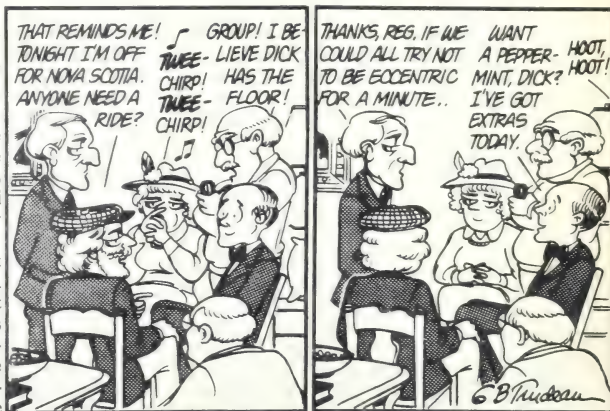
I do not mean to imply that these efforts do not require enormous amounts of courage and daring—"survival skills." I am only suggesting that what the backpacker or survival hiker encounters is not entirely "nature," and that the effort to go "back to nature" is one that is carefully circumscribed by the most intensely civilized artifacts. Irving Babbitt, the early twentieth-century critic of Rousseau's Romanticism, is particularly vigorous in his dissent from the idea of civilized people going "back to nature." This type, he says, is actually "the least primitive of all beings":

We have seen that the special form of unreality encouraged by the aesthetic romanticism of Rousseau is the dream of the simple life, the return to a nature that never existed, and that this dream made its special appeal to an age that was suffering from an excess of artificiality and conventionalism.

Babbitt notes shrewdly that our concept of the "state of nature" is actually one of the most sophisticated productions of civilization. Most primitive peoples, who live much closer to the soil than we do, are repelled by wilderness. The American colonists, when they first encountered the unspoiled landscape, saw nothing but a horrible desert, filled with savages.

What we really encounter when we talk about "wilderness," then, is one of the highest products of civilization. It is a reserve set up to keep people out, rather than a "state of nature" in which the inhabitants are "truly free." The only thing that makes people "free"

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in such a reservation is that they can leave so much behind when they enter. Those who try to stay too long find out how spurious this "freedom" is. After spending a year in a cabin in the north Canadian woods, Elizabeth Arthur wrote in *Island Sojourn*: "I never felt so completely tied to objects, resources, and the tools to shape them with."

What we are witnessing in the environmental movement's obsession with purified wilderness is what has often been called the "pastoral impulse." The image of nature as unspoiled, unspotted wilderness where we can go to learn the lessons of ecology is both a product of a complex, technological society and an escape from it. It is this undeniable paradox that forms the real problem of setting up "wildernesses." Only when we have created a society that gives us the leisure to appreciate it can we go out and experience what we imagine to be untrammelled nature. Yet if we lock up too much of our land in these reserves, we are cutting into our resources and endangering the very leisure that allows us to enjoy nature.

The answer is, of course, that we cannot simply let nature "take over" and assume that because we have kept roads and people out of huge tracts of land, then we have absolved ourselves of a national guilt. The concept of stewardship means taking responsibility, not simply letting nature take its course. Where tracts can be set aside from commercialism at no great cost, they should be. Where primitive hiking and recreation areas are appealing, they should be maintained. But if we think we are somehow appeasing the gods by not developing resources where they exist, then we are being very shortsighted. Conservation, not preservation, is once again the best guiding principle.

THE CULT of wilderness leads inevitably in the direction of religion. Once again, Irving Babbitt anticipated this fully:

When pushed to a certain point the nature cult always tends toward sham spirituality. . . . Those to whom I may seem to be treating the nature cult with undue severity should remember that I am treating it only in its pseudo-religious aspect. . . . My quarrel is only with the aesthete who assumes an apocalyptic pose and gives forth as a profound philosophy what is at best only a holiday or weekend view of existence. . . .

It is often said that environmentalism could or should serve as the basis of a new religious

consciousness, or a religious "reawakening." This religious trend is usually given an Oriental aura. E. F. Schumacher has a chapter on Buddhist economics in his classic *Small Is Beautiful*. Primitive animisms are also frequently cited as attitudes toward nature that are more "environmentally sound." One book on the environment states baldly that "the American Indian lived in almost perfect harmony with nature." Anthropologist Marvin Harris has even put forth the novel view that the primitive man is an environmentalist, and that many cultural habits are unconscious efforts to reduce population and conserve the environment. He says that the Hindu prohibition against eating cows and the Jewish tradition of not eating pork were both efforts to avoid the ecological destruction that would come with raising these grazing animals intensively. The implication in these arguments is usually that science and modern technology have somehow dulled our instinctive "environmental" impulses, and that Western "nonspiritual" technocracy puts us out of harmony with the "balance of nature."

Perhaps the most daring challenge to the environmental soundness of current religious tradition came early in the environmental movement, in a much quoted paper by Lynn White, professor of the history of science at UCLA. Writing in *Science* magazine in 1967, White traced "the historical roots of our ecological crisis" directly to the Western Judeo-Christian tradition in which "man and nature are two things, and man is master." "By destroying pagan animism," he wrote, "Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feelings of natural objects." He continued:

Especially in its Western form, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen. . . . Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia's religions (except, perhaps, Zoroastrianism), not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends. . . . In antiquity every tree, every spring, every stream, every hill had its own genius loci, its guardian spirit. . . . Before one cut a tree, mined a mountain, or dammed a brook, it was important to placate the spirit in charge of that particular situation, and keep it placated.

But the question here is not whether the Judeo-Christian tradition is worth saving, and of itself. It would be more than disappointing if we canceled the accomplishment of Judeo-Christian thought only to find that our treatment of nature had not changed a bit.

There can be no question that White is onto a favorite environmental theme here. What he calls the "Judeo-Christian tradition" is what other writers often term "Western civilization." It is easy to go through environmental books and find long outbursts about the evils that "civilization and progress" have brought us. The long list of Western achievements and advances, the scientific men of genius, are brought to task for creating our "environmental crisis." Sometimes the condemnation is of our brains, pure and simple. Here, for example, is the opening statement from a book about pesticides, written by the late Robert van den Bosch, an outstanding environmental advocate:

Our problem is that we are too smart for our own good, and for that matter, the good of the biosphere. The basic problem is that our brain enables us to evaluate, plan, and execute. Thus, while all other creatures are programmed by nature and subject to her whims, we have our own gray computer to motivate, for good or evil, our chemical engine. . . . Among living species, we are the only one possessed of arrogance, deliberate stupidity, greed, hate, jealousy, treachery, and the impulse to revenge, all of which may erupt spontaneously or be turned on at will.

At this rate, it can be seen that we don't even need religion to lead us astray. We are doomed from the start because we are not creatures of instinct, programmed from the start "by nature."

THIS TYPE of primitivism has been a very strong, stable undercurrent in the environmental movement. It runs from the kind of fatalistic gibberish quoted above to the Romanticism that names primitive tribes "instinctive environmentalists," from the pessimistic predictions that human beings cannot learn to control their own numbers to the notion that only by remaining innocent children of nature, untouched by progress, can the rural populations of the world hope to feed themselves. At bottom, as many commentators have pointed out, environmentalism is reminiscent of the German Romanticism of the nineteenth century, which sought to shed Christian (and Roman) traditions and revive the Teutonic gods because they were "more in touch with nature."

But are progress, reason, Western civilization, science, and the cerebral cortex really at the root of the "environmental crisis?" Perhaps the best answer comes from an environmentalist himself, Dr. René Dubos, a world-

renowned microbiologist, author of several prize-winning books on conservation and a founding member of the Natural Resources Defense Council. Dr. Dubos takes exception to the notion that Western Christianity has produced a uniquely exploitative attitude toward nature:

Erosion of the land, destruction of animal and plant species, excessive exploitation of natural resources, and ecological disasters are not peculiar to the Judeo-Christian tradition and to scientific technology. At all times, and all over the world, man's thoughtless interventions into nature have had a variety of disastrous consequences or at least have changed profoundly the complexity of nature.

Dr. Dubos has catalogued the non-Western or non-Christian cultures that have done environmental damage. Plato observed, for instance, that the hills in Greece had been heedlessly stripped of wood, and erosion had been the result; the ancient Egyptians and Assyrians exterminated large numbers of wild animal species; Indian hunters presumably caused the extinction of many large paleolithic species in North America; Buddhist monks building temples in Asia contributed largely to deforestation. Dubos notes:

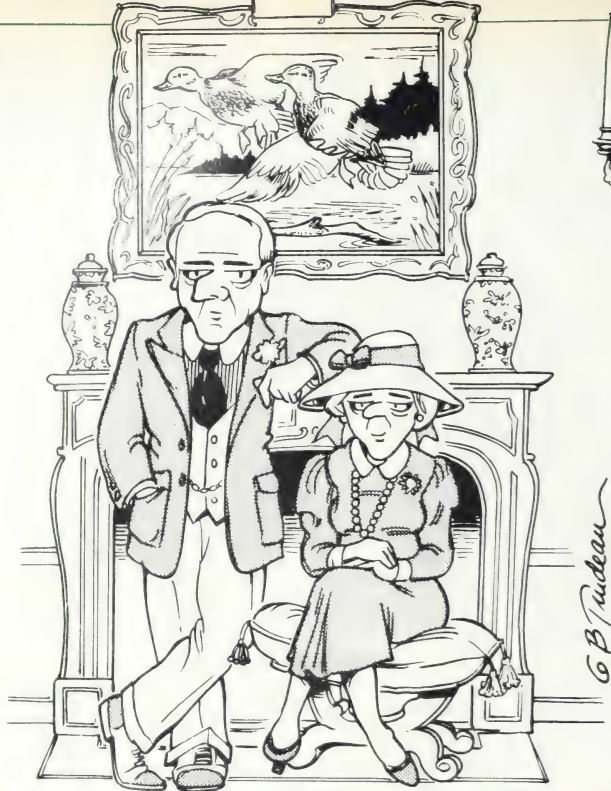
All over the globe and at all times . . . men have pillaged nature and disturbed the ecological equilibrium . . . nor did they have a real choice of alternatives. If men are more destructive now . . . it is because they have at their command more powerful means of destruction, not because they have been influenced by the Bible. In fact, the Judeo-Christian peoples were probably the first to develop on a large scale a pervasive concern for land management and an ethic of nature.

The concern that Dr. Dubos cites is the same one we have rescued out of the perception of environmentalism as a movement based on aristocratic conservatism. That is the legitimate doctrine of *stewardship* of the land. In order to take this responsibility, however, we must recognize the part we play in nature—that "the land is ours." It will not do simply to worship nature, to create a cult of wilderness in which humanity is an eternal intruder and where human activity can only destroy.

"True conservation," writes Dubos, "means not only protecting nature against human misbehavior but also developing human activities which favor a creative, harmonious relationship between man and nature." This is a legitimate goal for the environmental movement. □

"It will not do simply to worship nature, to create a cult of wilderness in which humanity is an eternal intruder and where human activity can only destroy."

HARPER'S
MARCH 1982



Fop...Birder...Political Spouse... Environmental Activist

A conversation with Dick Davenport.

by Garry Trudeau

Once in a very great while, some historical cataclysm comes along that threatens to obliterate everything that civilized man has ever held dear. The Inquisition was one such terrible force. So was German Fascism. The latest is James Watt.

SO BEGAN the lead editorial of last October's issue of the prestigious Maryland Audubon Society newsletter. Startling in its ferocity, the call for the removal from office of Secretary of the Interior

Garry Trudeau is the author of Doonesbury.

James Watt stunned the traditionally staid community of ornithologists in southern Maryland. "A gross abuse of your forum. Discontinue my subscription at once," thundered Gordon Downthistle, the noted titmouse expert, in a telegram to the paper. "Most intemperate," wrote another reader. "Tantamount to fouling our own nest."

The author of the offending editorial, Richard Windamere Davenport, is no stranger to controversy. Long regarded as an eccentric by a profession noted chiefly for its eccentricity, Davenport has for many years nettled the bird-watching establishment with his constant challenges to both orthodox ornithology and its preferred dress code. His appear-



ance, in particular, is a source of endless comment. In an age of rusticity and L. L. Bean, Davenport is strictly Bond Street. Often seen promenading along the Chesapeake shoreline, resplendent in boater, pearl-gray vest, and hand-stitched seersucker suit, Davenport has a reputation as the Tom Wolfe of the birding world.

Sartorial irrelevance aside, though, Davenport is basically a serious man, given to long periods of pontification, especially on the subject of his current crusade. He feels his campaign to remove Watt is picking up steam, and he is currently active in the circulation of a petition demanding Watt's resignation. In pursuit of signatures, Davenport has already gone door-to-door to more than 300 homes in the fashionable Maryland suburb of Bethesda, a remarkable feat given his years (seventy-six) and the length of most of the driveways. Even though Davenport is a relative newcomer to the political-activism game, no less a conservationist than Ansel Adams has rated him "Unusual ... someone to watch for. . . ."

To find out what makes this aging agitator tick, *Harper's* dispatched Washington correspondent Rick Redfern to interview Davenport at his residence on Foxhurn Road in Washington. The appointment fell on a warm, sun-drenched autumn afternoon, a happenstance that proved irresistible to the elderly bird-watcher. Oblivious to the time, Davenport took off for a nearby park to observe an itinerant flock of Canada geese, while the forgotten Redfern waited patiently in the parlor for nearly three hours. On his return, Davenport was gently chided by his wife, Republican Congresswoman Lacey Davenport, who had entertained the reporter all afternoon from behind a silver tea service given to her great-great-grandmother by Paul Revere. Perhaps because of her rebuke, Davenport seemed somewhat testy as the interview began.

HARPER'S: Mr. Davenport, your wife and I have been chatting this afternoon about your campaign to remove Secretary Watt. I wonder if you could tell us . . .

Dick Davenport: Ready to go, are we? That thing is on?

Harper's: Yes, sir.

Dick: Splendid. I have a small prepared statement to make.

Harper's: Um . . . I'm not sure we have time for a prepared statement, sir.

Dick: I should think you would welcome one. A bracing declaration always clears the air, don't you think? No, of course you don't. I see what you're

up to. You would have me confine myself to thoughtless outbursts for the sake of headlines. Well, I'm having none of it, sir. I won't help you sell magazines.

Lacey Davenport: Now, Dick, I don't think the gentleman was suggesting you should. He doesn't strike me as a man of commerce.

Harper's: Indeed not, ma'am. *Harper's* is not in the business of selling magazines. I only meant to point out that this is an interview, not a press conference.

Dick: Very well. I accept your apology. But since my modest statement has been ruled out of order, permit me at least to paraphrase its drift.

Harper's: Fair enough.

Dick: In my opinion, Secretary James Watt constitutes the gravest threat to our natural heritage since the invention of the caterpillar tractor. Those who claim to love their country cannot and should not rest until every measure has been taken to topple this insidious creature from his current perch of power.

Lacey: Nicely paraphrased, dear. In some ways, more prosaic than the original.

Harper's: Yes, we do seem to be off and running. . . .

Lacey: Perhaps we should all fortify ourselves for the fun ahead with another round of cucumber sandwiches.

Harper's: I'd prefer to push on, if I may, ma'am. Mr. Davenport, a similar denunciation of yours in the Maryland Audubon Society newsletter raised its fair share of eyebrows within the birding community. What about the Department of the Interior? Any reaction there?

Dick: Not so far. No one seems to have been caught more off balance by my editorial than Mr. Watt himself. He has yet to respond to it, a pretty strong indication of how seriously our newsletter is now being taken in official circles. Frankly, we were a little surprised by our own clout.

Lacey: It's been a very heady experience for Dick. He's been getting calls from birders all around the country.

Dick: Kissinger was right. Power is an aphrodisiac.

Harper's: Are you sure you're putting the right interpretation on Watt's silence? Isn't it possible he simply dismissed your criticisms out of hand, as he has those of virtually everyone who's opposed him?

Dick: If so, he'd be acting at his own peril. No, Jim Watt is no fool. He's heard about the petitions calling for his resignation; he knows now what a mobilized citizenry can do.

Harper's: But weren't there only a few hundred signatures on your petition?

Dick: Yes, but they represent only the tip of the iceberg. Besides, the quality of the signatures is as important as the quantity. For instance, the signatures I picked up at the Burning Tree Country Club



will undoubtedly carry a great deal of weight.

Lacey: Except those you got from the caddies, dear.

Dick: Even there, you're talking about people who spend most of their day working with senators and congressmen. A man's caddy is very often his closest confidant. That has to make a guy like Watt think twice.

Harper's: I wonder if we could shift our focus for the moment from Mr. Watt to some of his programs. There's been much discussion recently about the "multiple use" concept of public land management. Watt claims that for too long wilderness areas have been exempt from this concept, that environmentalists have locked away the resources of these lands to the point where they now exist only to be communed with—a single use at best.

Dick: Single use, indeed. What poppycock! Don't you see how he's twisting the legislative language to suit his own narrow designs? I shouldn't even dignify that argument with a response.

Lacey: Mr. Redfern did come all the way across town, dear.

Dick: Look, James Watt recognizes only two kinds of human activity on public lands: exploitative and nonexploitative. In his view, all nonexploitative activity comprises a "single use" of the land, no matter how many different purposes it's put to. . . .

Harper's: Come now, sir, aren't those purposes extremely limited in scope? Haven't wilderness areas really become little more than "ecological museums" for the upper middle class? [Editor's note: for a more protracted discussion of this question, the reader's attention is directed to the accompanying article by William Tucker.]

Dick: Not at all. They can be enjoyed by people from every walk of life.

Harper's: How? Wilderness areas are roadless. They're virtually inaccessible to all but the most determined and well-equipped backpacker.

Dick: Backpacker? Do I look like a backpacker to you? See here, man. . . .

Lacey: Mr. Redfern, it might be useful to refer to the mandate in question here. Section 4(b) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 states that: "Except as otherwise provided in this Act, wilderness areas shall be devoted to the public purposes of *recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservative, and historical use.*" The italics are mine, of course, but the intent of the act is clearly one of multiple use, is it not?

Harper's: I'd be interested in knowing what is referred to by the proviso "except as otherwise provided in this Act," Mrs. Davenport.

Lacey: You have a suspicious mind, dear boy. Fortunately, you have come to the right place for satisfaction. I was chief lobbyist for this act, and I am more than passing familiar with the text. Shall I

furnish you with an exegesis?

Harper's: That won't be necessary, ma'am. I bow to your superior grasp of the literature.

Dick: Thanks for holding him off while I regrouped, dear. As you can see, young man, it's quite pointless to try to buffalo me on points of the law. My wife is extremely well versed in her field, and she's not one bit shy about shoring up my case when called upon.

Lacey: Now, dear, don't be such a bully. You'll have to forgive Dick, Mr. Redfern, he can be such a bear when his motives come under fire. He and his fellow birders pride themselves in being true custodians of our natural heritage. They are very much like H. G. Wells's New Order of the Samurai, a kind of aristocracy of character and intellect whose members dedicate themselves to protecting society from its own baser instincts.

Dick: I won't apologize for that.

Lacey: Heavens, dear, no one is asking you to.

Dick: It was the way I was brought up. If you must vent your hostility, Mr. Redfern, then rail at the Founding Fathers and their "elitist" view of leadership. Shake your fist at 200 years of enlightened preservationist sentiment.

Harper's: Actually, sir, Americans have spent most of their history battling the wilderness, not preserving it.

Dick: Not my family. We lived in Philadelphia for six generations.

Harper's: Which gets us back to my original point. This "aristocracy" you speak of seems to reside, for the most part, in urban centers far from the pristine open spaces it professes to cherish. Why should potentially productive lands be set aside for the use of a small minority who visit them only a couple of times a year at most?

Dick: Because the time we spend there is quality time. We can't all be Thoreaus, Mr. Redfern. We have responsibilities to attend to, just like other people. But when we're out there in the wild, the experience is total. It's a sacred covenant, a spiritual symbiosis between man and the world as he originally found it.

Harper's: I see. And how long does the effect last?

Dick: Well, that depends somewhat on the topography. Mountainous regions are more likely to quicken the pulse than flatlands, but that can change if you get fogged in.

Harper's: I was being facetious.

Dick: So was I. I was ready for you that time. But tell you what. I'll lighten up if you will.

Harper's: Agreed. Why don't we just free-associate for a while?

Dick: Splendid. Intellectual hang gliding. Proceed.

Harper's: Try running with. . . let's see. . . game management.



Dick: Game management? That's easy. Kaibab plateau. Predator control. Bounties. Mountain lions. Deer. Overpopulation. Winter. Starvation. Disease. Death. Nothingness. Heidegger. Failed philosophy mid-term...

Harper's: Let's stop there. The Kaibab experience seems to be an enduring touchstone for you environmentalists. If I may ask, what does...

Dick: Sartre. Paris. The Closierie des Lilas, *A Moveable Feast*. Tailgating. Harvard-Yale game. Clint Frank. Leather helmets. Aviators. Lindbergh. Paris. The Closierie des Lilas. *A Moveable Feast*. Tailgating...

Harper's: Is he stuck?

Lacey: In the past? A little. Sometimes he just can't get past 1938.

Dick: It's because of the war. It doesn't yield to nostalgia. Over 400,000 American servicemen died in World War II, and I'm not going to free-associate with their memory.

Lacey: Dick served aboard the *Savannah* at Salerno, Mr. Redfern. It was a very trying time.

Dick: For six days, I stood on the poop deck and watched our lads being pulverized on the beachhead by the 29th Panzer Division. When they finally broke out, it only got worse. The commander, Mark Clark, was so busy sending out invitations for the fall of Rome that he forgot to mop up six German divisions.

Lacey: Dick's never forgiven Mark. They haven't spoken in over thirty years.

Harper's: We seem to be getting a little off the track again. I wonder if we could talk about wildlife preserves...

Dick: (to Lacey) Why is it whenever Salerno and Mark Clark come up, someone always tries to change the subject?

Lacey: Well, dear, I imagine many people are trying to put the Italian campaign behind them...

Harper's: You've been a very vocal critic of Secretary Watt's plan to transfer the Matagorda Wildlife Refuge to the state of Texas. Why's that?

Dick: Because honorable men don't stand by and watch one of the most important sanctuaries in the world wantonly violated by private industry.

Harper's: You really think the state would allow developers to overrun the island?

Dick: Does a bear conduct its business in the woods? Unless I'm terribly mistaken, the Sheraton Corporation doesn't currently have an endangered-species division. So who will safeguard the wildlife? There are at least eight endangered species inhabiting Matagorda, and most of them owe their existence to that one sanctuary. Especially the whooping crane. In 1941, only fifteen whooping cranes wintered on the island; today the figure is seventy-eight.

Lacey: Goodness, it sounds a little like Palm Beach. Remember when we had it all to ourselves, dear?

Dick: Yes, but at least we had effective zoning to protect us from the onslaught. I can't tell you how I fear for these birds. I've watched them migrate to Matagorda for thirty years. I know each of them individually, their coloring, their markings, their personality quirks...

Harper's: Whooping cranes have personality quirks?

Dick: Of course they do. Birds are as individual as you and I. One of them, for instance, won't eat water beetles unless they've been strained. Another spends a lot of time with the ducks. A third is gay. But all that's okay. It's a sanctuary.

Harper's: I think I'm beginning to understand the whooping crane's brush with extinction.

Dick: It's a very sensitive species.

Harper's: But surely you see the developers' point of view? Why should a bunch of neurotic birds receive a free lunch, as it were? They contribute absolutely nothing to the economy, unlike chickens and turkeys. If the whooping cranes can't hack changing conditions on Matagorda, what's to keep them from voting with their wings?

Lacey: Mr. Redfern, when Mother Nature was handing out survival equipment, she didn't take into account the extraordinary capacity of *Homo sapiens* to annihilate his fellow creatures. Some animals are simply better equipped to deal with the human menace than others. Thus on the one hand you have your blue-collar beasts, like rats and cockroaches, who are perfectly happy to breed in your pantry, and on the other you have the high-strung peregrine falcon, which can't produce an egg unless it's surrounded by twenty miles of virgin wilderness in every direction. So you see, young sir, not all species are dealt the same hand.

Dick: Besides, where's the crane supposed to go, Mexico? They have enough of their own birds there. There's also the question of natural habitat. The whooping crane could no more survive in the Yucatán than I could survive in Dayton.

Lacey: Don't listen to him, Mr. Redfern. Dick's very adaptable. As long as he's got a cow pasture to set his tripod in, he's as happy as the proverbial lark.

Dick: What's that noise?

Harper's: I'm afraid our tape's run out.

Lacey: Gracious, look at the time. Six o'clock and we haven't yet dressed for dinner. Forgive us, Mr. Redfern, but we hate to keep the cook waiting.

Harper's: Not at all, Mrs. Davenport. I have my own dinner waiting for me at home.

Lacey: You will give our fondest regards to all our friends at Harper's, won't you?

Harper's: Consider it done, madam. ■

A CAR FOR THE LEFT SIDE OF YOUR BRAIN.

The left side of your brain, recent investigations tell us, is the logical side.

It figures out that $1 + 1 = 2$. And, in a few cases, that $E = mc^2$.

On a more mundane level, it chooses the socks you wear, the cereal you eat, and the car you drive. All by means of rigorous Aristotelian logic.

However, and a big however it is, for real satisfaction, you must achieve harmony with the other side of your brain.

The right side, the poetic side, that says, "Yeah, Car X has a reputation for lasting a long time but it's so dull, who'd want to drive it that long anyway?"

The Saab Turbo looked at from all sides.

To the left side of your brain, Saab turbocharging is a technological feat that retains good gas mileage while also increasing performance.

To the right side of your brain, Saab turbocharging is what makes a Saab go like a bat out of hell.

The left side sees the safety in high performance. (Passing on a two-lane highway. Entering a freeway in the midst of high-speed traffic.)

The right side lives only for the thrills.

The left side considers that *Road & Track* magazine just named Saab "The Sports Sedan for the Eighties." By unanimous choice of its editors.

The right side eschews informed endorsements by editors who have spent a lifetime comparing cars. The right side doesn't know much about cars, but knows what it likes.

The left side scans this chart.

Wheelbase	99.1 inches
Length	187.6 inches
Width	66.5 inches
Height	55.9 inches
Fuel-tank capacity	16.6 gallons
EPA City	(19) mpg*
EPA Highway	31 mpg*

The right side looks at the picture on the opposite page.

The left side compares a Saab's comfort with that of a Mercedes. Its performance with that of a BMW. Its braking with that of an Audi.

The right side looks at the picture.

The left side looks ahead to the winter when a Saab's front-wheel drive will keep a Saab in front of traffic.

The right side looks at the picture.

The left side also considers the other seasons of the year when a Saab's front-wheel drive gives it the cornering ability of a sports car.

The right side looks again at the picture.

Getting what you need vs. getting what you want.

Needs are boring; desires are what make life worth living.

The left side of your brain is your mother telling you that a Saab is good for you. "Eat your vegetables." (In today's world, you need a car engineered like a Saab.) "Put on your raincoat." (The Saab is economical. Look at the price-value relationship.) "Do your homework." (The passive safety of the construction. The active safety of the handling.)

1982 SAAB PRICE** LIST

900 3-Door	5-Speed	\$10,400
	Automatic	10,750
900 4-Door	5-Speed	\$10,700
	Automatic	11,050
900S 3-Door	5-Speed	\$12,100
	Automatic	12,450
900S 4-Door	5-Speed	\$12,700
	Automatic	13,050
900 Turbo 3-Door	5-Speed	\$15,600
	Automatic	15,950
900 Turbo 4-Door	5-Speed	\$16,260
	Automatic	16,610

All turbo models include a Sony XR70, 4-Speaker Stereo Sound System as standard equipment. The stereo can be, of course, perfectly balanced: left and right.

The right side of your brain guides your foot to the clutch, your hand to the gears, and listens for the "zzzooooommm."

Together, they see the 1982 Saab Turbo as the responsible car the times demand you get. And the performance car you've always, deep down, wanted with half your mind.

*Saab 900 Turbo. Remember, use estimated mpg for comparison only. Mileage varies with speed, trip length, and weather. Actual highway mileage will probably be less. **Manufacturer's suggested retail price. Not including taxes, license, freight, dealer charges or options desired by either side of your brain.

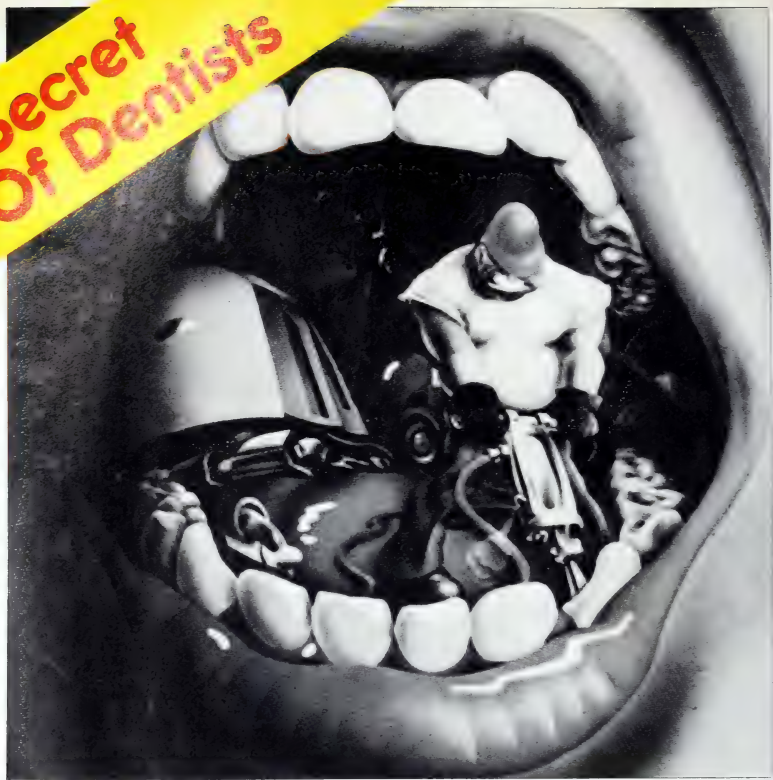
**A CAR FOR THE RIGHT SIDE
OF YOUR BRAIN.**



SAAB

most intelligent car ever built.

The Secret Lives Of Dentists



Robert Grossman

Pity these busy monsters.

by David Owen

HORACE WELLS, a twenty-six-year-old dentist in Hartford, Connecticut, inhaled a dose of nitrous oxide and permitted a colleague to extract a wisdom tooth. The operation was painless, and when Wells regained sensibility he proclaimed "a new era in tooth-pulling." The year was 1844. Medical science had made great strides in the preceding decades, but tooth extractions, amputations, and all other operations were still performed on conscious patients. Despite a centuries-old search for a method of deadening pain, even minor surgery was torture.

Wells immediately grasped the significance of his discovery and traveled to Boston to repeat the experiment before a medical class at Massachusetts General Hospital. With a Harvard student acting as patient, he administered the gas and clamped his forceps on a tooth. The student cried out in pain, and Wells was

thrown from the lecture hall, accompanied by cries of "Humbug!" He later abandoned dentistry and made a fitful living peddling canaries, coal-sifters, and shower baths. In 1848, a little over three years after his bungled demonstration, he took his life while imprisoned in New York for assaulting prostitutes with acid, by slashing an artery in his leg—after first anesthetizing himself with chloroform.

Today Wells is recognized as one of several pioneers in the discovery of anesthesia. He might also be viewed as the prototype of the modern dentist, since his biography anticipates in grotesque form at least two of the enduring themes of his profession. Like Wells, whose Harvard guinea pig later confessed to having felt no pain, modern dentists regularly face patients who are irrationally fearful, often to the point of hostility. Also like Wells, modern dentists undergo enormous occupational

David Owen is a freelance writer living in New York.

stresses, partly as a result of that hostility: according to studies by Dr. William E. Sorrel, former president of the American Association of Psychoanalytic Physicians, and author of a recent study of professional stress, American dentists suffer disproportionately (and increasingly) from alcoholism, drug abuse, and divorce. They also kill themselves at twice the rate of the general population, giving them the highest suicide rate of all the professions.

Which is just fine with almost everybody, one gets the feeling. Little love is lost on dentists in this country, notwithstanding a recent Gallup poll in which they were rated higher than all but clergymen and pharmacists in terms of "honesty and ethical standards." But while it may be true that most of us view our dentists as honest, how many think of them as interesting? A dentist is a drudge. Who was surprised, on seeing Warren Beatty's *Reds*, that the man Louise Bryant abandoned for John Reed was a *dentist*? Dentists are like barbers, but without the folksy panache. They refer to the mouth as "the oral cavity" and to teeth-cleaning as "prophylaxis." Their uniforms look like bowling shirts. Their offices look like futuristic beauty parlors. Their fingers taste of soap (who even knows what a lawyer's fingers taste like?). Dentists, according to the abiding image, are people who wanted to be physicians but weren't smart enough to get into medical school.

Who are these people, and what do they want? And why don't we like them better than we do?

The roots of the profession

DENTISTRY as a formal profession has existed only since Horace Wells's day, the mid-nineteenth century, but its roots stretch back several thousand years. The ancient Egyptians prescribed medicines for toothaches, the Etruscans crafted false teeth and gold bridgework, the Persians filled cavities. "Dentistry was practiced," writes one historian, "but it was considered by the Arabs, as by the Greek and Roman doctors, a very inferior branch of the profession, and was, for the most part, as with ourselves, till very recently relegated to uneducated persons." One such person, England's King John, recovered money from a debtor by pulling his teeth, one by one, until he paid up. Elsewhere dentists were less illustrious. "The only dentists in Paré's time," writes another historian, "—if we exclude the bathhouse keepers, peddlers, and old women—were the barber surgeons." Scientific knowledge advanced at a

glacial pace: it was not until the sixteenth century that it was definitively proved that women have as many teeth as men.

Dentistry was considered a very minor branch of medicine (if not a somewhat exalted branch of masonry) until the eighteenth century, when a French scientist named Pierre Fauchard wrote the first substantial treatise on the subject. Dentistry's separation from medicine has never been complete; in the Soviet Union, for example, teeth are cared for not by dentists but by stomatologists, physicians specializing in diseases of the mouth. But with Fauchard the incipient profession began to assume an independent scientific standing. "I speak of the care which must be taken to keep the teeth clean," Fauchard wrote, "how to fill them, how to cleanse them, to burn or cauterize them, and to fill them with lead." Most dental work was still performed by physicians or lesser craftsmen, but dental specialists became more common.

From the middle of the nineteenth century on, the principal advances in dentistry have been made not in Europe but in the United States (although not without plenty of false starts; on the American frontier, settlers preserved their dental health by gargling with urine). The forerunner of the American Dental Association was established in 1839, eight years before the founding of a comparable body for physicians. The Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, the world's first dental school, opened the following year. Dentistry's status as a true profession can be said to date from then.

Today there are sixty American dental schools, in thirty-three states and in Puerto Rico. The newest one is at Oklahoma's Oral [sic] Roberts University, which will graduate its first class in the spring. The sixty schools combined will turn out roughly 5,500 new dentists this year, bringing the total number of active practitioners in America to approximately 140,000.

DENTAL EDUCATION in the United States typically involves four years of study divided between classroom work in the basic medical sciences and hands-on clinical experience. The first two years are generally analogous to the first two years of medical school, and in some cases identical. At Harvard, which runs the nation's only five-year program, dental students spend their first two years at the medical school. Dental students usually begin treating patients in the second or third year, performing assigned procedures on clinic patients under the

American dentists suffer disproportionately from alcoholism, drug abuse, and divorce."

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supervision of their professors.

Unlike medical students, who must undergo several years of hospital residency before striking out on their own, dental students are deemed competent to set themselves up in practice immediately following graduation, assuming they pass their state licensing exams. (A limited number of one-year residencies are available, but they are optional.) Contrary to popular perception, all licensed dentists are entitled to perform all dental procedures—they can make braces, operate on oral tissues, extract teeth, fit dentures, and so on—but if they wish to limit their practice to one of these areas they are required to receive further training and special certification from a professional board overseeing that field. The number of dentists who do so is likely to get smaller in the next few years; general practitioners who find themselves strapped for patients are beginning to do more of the work they once referred to specialists.

Economic pressures have had a dramatic and disturbing effect on dental education. Between 1975 and 1980, the number of first-year places in American dental schools increased from 5,763 to 6,030; over the same period, the number of applicants for those places decreased from 15,734 to just 9,601. In 1981, the New York University dental

school was actually unable to fill its freshman class. The primary reason for the drop in applications is the rising cost of dental education. Tuition at NYU is now \$13,000 a year. Instruments and books for first-year students cost \$5,000, and fees and living expenses have to be added in as well. It's not unheard of for dental students to graduate with \$100,000 in educational debts, assuming they can find someone to lend them the money.

The most important effect of rising costs is not seen until after graduation, when young dentists face the double burden of paying off their debts and earning a living. Equipping an office can cost \$100,000, to say nothing of the expense of buying a house, feeding a family, educating a child. And even when young dentists are wealthy enough to buy their own drill bits and X-ray machines, many of them find that the most attractive areas to practice in are already overserved. They are further hampered by the fact that most people view dental care as a luxury. Although tooth decay affects 98 percent of all people, making it the nation's most common health problem, at least half of all Americans don't visit dentists regularly. In 1976, the most recent year for which figures are available, more than 20 percent of all dentists said they had fewer patients than they wished.

Because of the traditional preference for solo practice in dentistry (well over half of all practitioners work without partners or cost sharing), finding an older dentist willing to take on an inexperienced associate can be extremely difficult. As a result, a growing number of dental-school graduates have been forced to seek salaried or even part-time or commissioned employment in discount clinics or in health programs associated with trade unions, insurance companies, or corporations. An advertised opening for a dentist in New Jersey, offering wages of twelve dollars an hour, drew 300 applicants from New York.

The rise of so-called "retail" dentistry has been perhaps the most important development in the profession in recent years. A number of department-store chains now offer discount dental services in some of their outlets. Other cut-rate offices, known in the profession as "advertising clinics," have opened in shopping centers in order to take advantage of relaxed restrictions on professional advertising. One clinic lures timid patients with the promise that its dentists will clean teeth without even looking for decay. Others offer "bargain" procedures at special prices, including same-day denture service and discount root-canal work.

Quality in such offices is sometimes (if not always) greatly reduced. Because all discount



Home Dentistry

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operations depend for their profitability on maintaining enormous patient turnover, the dentists they employ are under constant pressure to work fast. If a young dentist is right out of school, his most recent experience of filling a tooth may have been in his state licensing exam. In New York, license candidates are given half a day to perform that procedure; in a discount clinic, they may be allowed only a few minutes. A reporter from *Dental Economics* magazine paid twelve dollars for a six-minute cleaning at one clinic, then visited his own dentist, where a hygienist spent half an hour scraping off tartar that the retail dentist had missed or ignored. The ADA has been keeping an eye on department-store operations for some time, but it has yet to issue a definitive assessment. The reason for the delay isn't hard to understand: for too many youthful members of the profession, retail dentistry may be the only thing standing between them and bankruptcy.

All these developments taken together have cast a certain pall over dental students. When I spoke informally with a roomful of young residents at New York's Mount Sinai Hospital, they were unanimously bitter about department-store clinics. "With prices so low," one said, "just think how much work you have to do in order to make a decent living. The dentists may actually be good, but you're going to start getting sloppy, you're going to start overlooking things, you're going to start taking shortcuts. You wouldn't want somebody doing that in your mouth, would you?"

If only because of the enormous obstacles they have to overcome simply to get through school, dental students tend to be extremely dedicated. But maintaining that dedication once they enter the job market is another matter altogether. And for the first time in the history of the profession, a lot of prospective dentists are weighing the costs and benefits and wondering if it's all worthwhile.

"If I had it all to do over again," one recent graduate told me as he sipped a stiff, four-dollar cocktail at a dental-convention open house, "I'd become an engineer."

Chewed fingers

GIVEN ALL of this, why in the world would anyone even consider becoming a dentist? Some people, certainly, apply to dental school simply because they want to be doctors but can't get into medical school. But there are many other reasons. Dentists typically work shorter days than physicians do (the average work week in

1976 was just over forty hours), which means they can spend more time with their families. They also find satisfactions in their work that are in many cases unique to the profession. Unlike physicians, who spend much of their time treating diseases that either never go away or go away all by themselves, dentists can usually see concrete results from what they do. A filled tooth, properly done, is a finished piece of work. And because dental diseases typically *don't* go away all by themselves, dentists take satisfaction in the knowledge that without their intervention their patients would not get better.

Dentists also speak of an artistic element in the work they do. A restored tooth can be a piece of sculpture, a root canal a feat of engineering. The raw materials are exotic—gold, silver, mercury, porcelain—and the instruments have the sturdy sort of beauty common to all well-made tools. At professional meetings dentists hover like children around tables of gleaming curettes and margin trimmers, excavators and explorers, pluggers and probes. A dentist, at the most functional level, has as much in common with a jeweler as with a physician.

Even for established and skillful practitioners, though, dentistry holds an inordinate number of stresses and disappointments. Working in a patient's mouth, one dentist says, "is like repairing a fine watch while someone is spitting on your fingers." Or chewing on them, which is something anxious patients have been known to do. Some people are so afraid of their dentists that they have to be completely anesthetized before their teeth can even be cleaned ("Total dental care while you sleep," advertises one Manhattan dentist). Others sit frozen, their faces drained of blood, ready to cry out the instant the dentist administers some secret, lethal wound to the back of the throat. Despite the fact that dentistry today has the potential to be completely painless, most people feel at least some foreboding on climbing into the chair.

"There's a sort of constant rejection associated with what we do," says Dr. Morris Yarosh, a general practitioner in New York City. "Dentists who don't have a good self-image to begin with are going to feel the impact of this very severely. Dentists work in an area that is associated with pain, and they're constantly being told by patients, 'Doc, don't take this personally, but I hate dentists.'"

Some dentists go to great lengths to court their patients' affections. Dr. William Schmidt of San Jose, California, who calls himself the "Plaque Invader," sometimes wears blue tights

"Working in a patient's mouth is 'like repairing a fine watch while someone is spitting on your fingers.'"

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and an enormous tooth-shaped helmet when he treats children. He also keeps a hot tub bubbling in his office for grownups who need to calm themselves down. Other dentists supply their patients with everything from Sony Walkmans to color TVs and video games in the hope of keeping them distracted. Threatening words like "pain" and "drill" have been replaced by "sensitivity" and "handpiece." Some dentists allay patients' fears by making liberal use of the nitrous-oxide tank: the *Manhattan Yellow Pages* carries one dentist's ad for "pleasurable experiences at moderate fees."

Most people would probably be surprised to learn that dentists are sometimes as afraid of their patients as their patients are of them. Some dentists brood for hours before appointments with especially hostile people. Even dentists who might not otherwise be fearful will often pick up unconsciously on the moods of their patients. Waves of anxiety can pass back and forth between them, each making the other feel increasingly uncomfortable. In the eyes of the patient—flat on his back and defenseless, with a stranger's fingers in his mouth—the dentist is an intimate intruder. Oral tissues bristle with nerve endings whose sensitivity is heightened by the real and symbolic significance of everything we do with our mouths: eating, speaking, kissing. The dentist, meanwhile, is left to carry on a necessarily one-sided conversation and to ponder the thought

that most of the people he sees every day would rather be anywhere else than with him.

DENTISTS' anxieties don't disappear when the final patient of the day goes home. Because dental school is generally held to be less rigorous than medical school, many dentists feel like second-class citizens next to physicians. ("Physician," incidentally, is a word dentists use religiously; "You always hear people refer to 'doctors and dentists,'" one dentist told me, "but actually it should be 'physicians and dentists.' A dentist is a doctor." Physicians, on the other hand, almost always call themselves "doctors," particularly when speaking to dentists.) Several dentists I talked to said they dreaded being introduced to physicians at social gatherings. This may not be all paranoia. "Dental students are all a little stupid," one medical student told me. "All they ever want to talk about is the cars they're going to buy when they're in practice."

In addition to being an emotionally draining profession, dentistry can be a physically debilitating one. Dentists who work standing up—and until the introduction of "sit-down" dentistry several years ago, virtually all of them did—can suffer slipped disks, impaired circulation, foot problems, varicose veins, and curvature of the spine. Other common ailments include migraine headaches, muscle spasms, eczema, neurodermatitis, colitis, ulcers, and obesity. The buzzing and whining of office equipment causes deafness. Mercury used in making filling compounds can poison the people who handle it. Long-term exposure to trace amounts of anesthetic gases can cause miscarriages, birth defects, liver disease, kidney disease, and neurological problems in both dentists and their assistants. (Not to mention their spouses: according to a study published in the *Journal of the American Dental Association (JADA)*, "a 50% increase in the incidence of spontaneous abortion is noted among wives of male dentists if the male has been heavily exposed to inhalation anesthetics during the year prior to conception.")

X rays also pose a health threat to dentists, although nowadays the risk is probably greater for patients than for dental personnel. Even so, dentists with faulty equipment can bathe themselves and their assistants in radiation day after day, with the usual results. Like any number of other physical horrors, this one has a long history in the dental profession. Dr. C. Edmund Kells, the first dentist to use X rays on a patient, developed severe radiation burns on his hands after fourteen years,



Dentistry in History

The Granger Collection

and was eventually found to have cancer in his arm. In 1928, after the cancerous arm had been amputated, Dr. Kells committed suicide in his office.

Assuming that a dentist is able to salvage both body and soul, there remains the problem of meeting his mortgage payments. Dentistry is a comfortable profession, but it is not a regal one. In 1978, the most recent year for which figures are available, the average dentist had a pretax income of \$48,000. Physicians in general practice, by way of comparison, earned \$58,000 in the same year; cardiologists averaged \$96,000. According to Robert Levoy, a professional consultant and author of a book called *The \$100,000 Practice and How to Build It*, the average income figure for dentists has risen very little since 1978. The average dentist, in other words, earns roughly the same as a top law-school graduate in his first year with an established New York firm. And lawyers don't have to buy X-ray machines. Overhead costs, which have always been substantial for dentists, have skyrocketed in recent years, leaving some practitioners even farther behind.

In the face of rising costs and stagnating incomes, more and more dentists are seeking professional help in running their offices. There are now at least two professional magazines devoted exclusively to "practice management" in dentistry, and courses in the same subject are hot tickets at dental meetings, where continuing-education topics range from "Organizing the Dental Staff for Greater Production and Profit" to "Colored Stones for Investment—The Newest Game in Town." At one lecture I sat in on last year a roomful of recession-weary dentists took careful notes while the president-elect of the ADA talked about "marketing" and "patient load" and then spelled out his personal recipe for success (S stands for Sense of Direction, U stands for Understanding, C stands for Courage, and so on).

Sometimes not even Sense of Direction, Understanding, and Courage are enough to pull dentists through. The divorce rate in the profession has risen 12 percent in the last decade, and drug abuse, alcoholism, and suicide have also been on the rise. Although dentists have less access than physicians to narcotics and other drugs, they can still come into contact with dangerous substances, most notably nitrous oxide. Some dentists find they can't get through the day unless they relax between patients by inhaling a little laughing gas, a habit that can have disastrous consequences. In January 1979, *JADA* reported the case of one dentist who became so dependent on nitrous oxide that he sometimes inhaled it



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Dentistry in Art

for eight hours a day. He developed a severe neurological disorder and gradually came to require a wheelchair. He later took his life by shooting himself in the head.

Guilt and self-hatred

DR. LEON LEFER is a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who specializes in psychological problems common to dentistry, an area in which he is uniquely knowledgeable: before a physical handicap forced him to begin a new career thirty years ago, he spent six years as a practicing dentist. Although it has been three decades since he changed professions, mercury stains still darken the tips of his fingers, and one of his shoulders is slightly lower than the other—the result of long days spent leaning over a dental chair. I visited Dr. Lefer in his apartment office one morning and asked him why dentists seem to have such a hard time.

"A normal person needs a certain amount of distance between himself and other people," he said. "But the dentist has to be very close to the bodies of strangers all day long. This causes stress. As a result, the dentist has to

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compensate by having a lot of space around him when he finishes work, which can be disastrous if the family and children don't understand and if the dentist doesn't know how to communicate his needs. And most professional people don't know how to communicate emotional needs. Why? Because that's another stress. There's a tendency, if you become a physician or a dentist, to be the kind of person who has to deaden his feelings in order to tolerate the suffering of patients, and the drawing of blood, and the lacerating and mutilating of flesh.

"Most dentists, by the way, are anhedonic, which means they avoid or delay pleasure. Sometimes they delay it so long that they find several years have gone by without their taking a vacation. Then, when they do take a vacation, they deal with their leisure time as if they were working in the office, because they're so perfectionist. I think that the number of dentists who have been successful suicides is great because, as perfectionists, if they set out

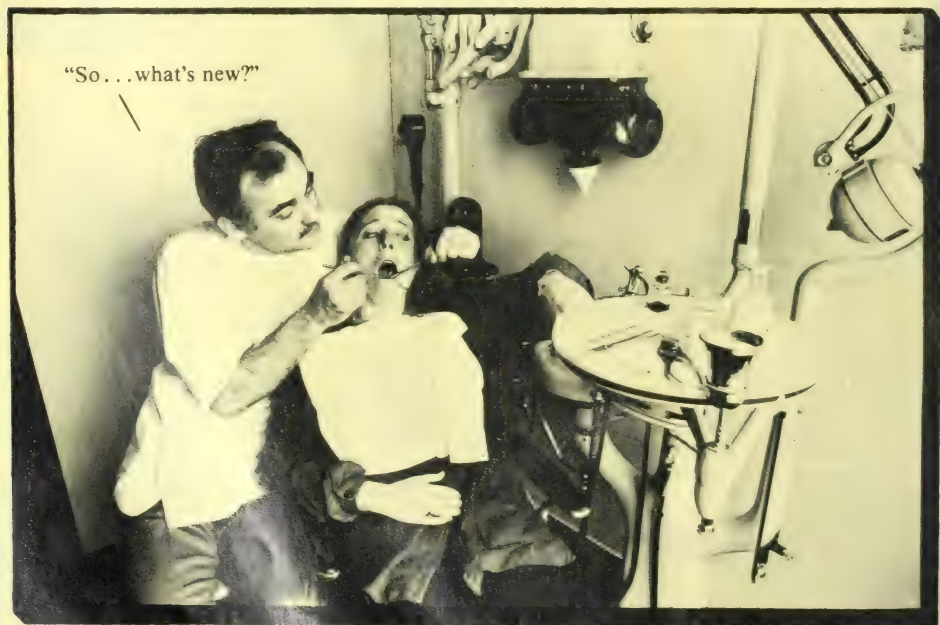
to kill themselves, they're very likely to succeed."

In addition to maintaining a private psychiatric and psychoanalytic practice, Dr. Lefer teaches classes at both the medical and dental schools at Columbia University, and at the dental school at NYU. I asked him if he had noticed any differences between dental students and medical students.

"The difference," he said, "is that the medical students seem to have been brought up in an environment that allowed them to make mistakes and not suffer so much guilt and self-hatred if the least little thing went wrong. As a result they can kill people and blame somebody else. Whereas if the dentist were really to hurt somebody, he couldn't live with himself.

"I've been through both professions, and I think that much more is demanded of a dental student than of a medical student. Dental school is much more difficult, because having to do something with your hands so that it

How time flies when you're having fun



Good Times in Dentistry

comes out just so is more difficult than simply undying something. And, you see, the dental student's natural perfectionism is perpetuated by his teachers. If a dental student shows a teacher a piece of work that is, let's say, 80-90 percent perfect, the teacher, because of his own inner demands for perfection, seems to have no latitude between what's perfect and what's not good at all. As a result he's likely to tell the dental student, "That's crap," which gives the student feeling that he's worth zero, instead of 80 percent. And that's how they live.

"A dentist is always automatically comparing himself with someone whom he believes to be more capable. It's an automatic competitive process in which he over-competes with himself and others, and as a result he feels only half as good as he should. And that is why he's so good for the public. Because anyone who walks around competing with himself to this tremendous degree is overly compulsive about the quality of work he does, and since the public knows nothing about what goes on in their mouths—absolutely nothing—it's really up to the dentist to decide what kind of quality he'll put in the mouth. And unfortunately for the public, if they pick a very compulsive dentist, the quality of the work is magnificent."

THE COMPULSIVE dentist may indeed do magnificent work, but how many dentists are compulsive? More to the point, how many dentists, compulsive or otherwise, do magnificent work?

The question is impossible to answer, for the simple reason that there has never been a definitive study of quality in the dental profession; nor is there likely to be one. Partly because they tend to work alone, dentists resist the idea of being evaluated, or even observed, by others. And because inferior dental work may not be discovered until years after it is performed, patients are seldom in a position to make informed judgments.

Nevertheless, dental malpractice suits have been increasing in both size and number in recent years. Typical cases involve dentists' failure to diagnose oral disease, mistaken extraction of healthy teeth, and injuries arising from careless handling of dental instruments. In one case in 1975, a young woman was awarded \$275,000 after the steel burr of her dentist's drill broke off and lodged in her lip, causing a permanent numbness that reduced the pleasure she had previously taken in kissing her husband (who was himself awarded \$15,000 for "loss of services"). In a much

more serious case, a New York court awarded \$750,000 to the family of a three-year-old boy who died when a careless dental hygienist in a city hospital allowed him to swallow a lethal dose of a topical fluoride treatment.

Cases of this magnitude are extremely rare in dentistry, however. If what dentists do doesn't seem terribly important to most laymen, what they do wrong doesn't seem terribly important to most juries. According to a 1981 study by Jury Verdict Research, Inc., the median dental malpractice award is \$26,500. That figure is roughly three and a half times larger than it was in 1975, but it is still so small that most lawyers are reluctant to take on dental cases. (The median award in psychiatric malpractice, by comparison, is \$200,000). The New York law firm of Fuchsberg & Fuchsberg, one of the nation's leading professional malpractice firms, handled only a dozen dental cases last year, and all of them were settled out of court. Because the firm's costs run to about \$5,000 or \$6,000 per case, and because its fee (a third of any award or settlement) is charged only if the case is successful, a complaint has to be not only airtight but also fairly substantial before the firm will even consider it. "There just isn't any profit in most of these cases," one lawyer told me.

Whether or not it is profitable to lawyers, shoddy dentistry certainly exists, and there is reason to believe that it is on the rise. One dentist I spoke to said that 80 percent of the work he does consists of repairing inferior work performed by other dentists. As economic pressures on practitioners have increased, more and more dentists have found it necessary to work faster than they (or their patients) might wish. Because patients are extremely resistant to increases in dental fees, and because dentists' fixed costs have been rising at an astonishing rate, many dentists have had to speed up simply to keep from falling behind. Most dentists, certainly, maintain high standards, but the pressure to work fast affects the entire profession.

Speed is a very popular topic in dentistry these days. Last July, *Dental Economics* magazine (which in palmer days was known as *Oral Hygiene* magazine) carried an advertisement for a three-day seminar on "the successful Barnes' practice management technique," one of whose highlights is "the 90-second prep" procedure for crowns and bridges. Dental equipment companies advertise faster and faster dental drills and ultrasonic devices that supposedly eliminate the need for time-consuming manual removal of tartar deposits on patients' teeth. Dr. Burton Press, president-elect of the ADA, sometimes piques the interest of

"A peculiar fact about the traditional fee structure is that saving a tooth is very often less lucrative than destroying it."



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audiences he lectures to by telling them that he can teach them to do twenty crowns in one day instead of a mere eight. Press is no advocate of substandard work, but he knows how to catch a dentist's attention.

Economic forces can determine not only the speed at which dentists work but also the kinds of procedures they perform. A peculiar fact about the traditional fee structure in dentistry is that saving a tooth is very often less lucrative than destroying it. The average fee for a simple silver filling (known in the profession as a one-surface amalgam restoration) is \$19.33; the average fee for a simple nonsurgical extraction, on the other hand, is \$23.41. And because pulling a tooth is typically much less time-consuming than filling it, the more radical procedure can seem even more attractive. Consider, too, that an extracted tooth should ideally be replaced by an artificial one, and that crowns, bridges, and partial dentures can cost hundreds of dollars.

Questions about quality in dentistry involve much more than matters of speed or cost. Like any profession, dentistry attracts its share of quacks, and controlling them can be extremely difficult. Unlike new drugs, which must be approved by the government before being placed in general use, experimental techniques in dentistry, as in medicine, are essentially unregulated. "You can do just about any damn

thing you want," one dentist told me. "I could go into the back room, take a nail, sterilize it, hammer it into a patient's jaw, and say it's an implant, and he couldn't do a damn thing about it."

The "implant" just referred to is a case in point. Implants are artificial anchoring devices that are sometimes surgically embedded in a patient's jaw and then used to support false teeth. Their attraction is that they seem to offer toothless patients a functional and dignified alternative to ordinary dentures. The problem, many dentists say, is simply that implants are dangerous: they can cause rapid and irreversible bone loss, chronic infection of oral tissues, periodontal disease, punctured sinuses, and agonizing pain. "I've never seen an implant success," says Dr. Marvin Schissel, a practicing dentist and author of a book called *Dentistry and Its Victims*. "I've never heard of an implant success."

Despite the dangers, though, "implantology" (as practitioners refer to their field) is a thriving business. Implantologists have their own professional organization (The American Academy of Implant Dentistry) as well as their own publication (the quarterly *Journal of Oral Implantology*, a glossy periodical dotted with typos and grammatical errors). Like most inhabitants of scientific twilight zones, implantologists tend to be messianic in promoting their procedure, and also quick to detect conspiracies in nonbelievers.

Implantology even enjoys the support of some of its victims. "I know an elderly man who had implants," says Dr. John Dodes, who is Marvin Schissel's partner. "Two years later one side of his face was swollen, and he said 'Look at my beautiful implants.' He was so proud of them. His wife said, 'He's crazy. He lost forty pounds. He's been on penicillin constantly for two years now, just to keep the infection down, and this is the first week that he's not swollen on both sides.' He eventually had to go to a hospital and have them all removed. He lost so much bone that now he can't even wear a denture, and he still claims how great it is, because he says, 'You've got to be a rich man to have done what I did.'"

PERHAPS the most fertile area for the cultivation of quackery in the dental profession today is a group of ailments known collectively as TMJ disorder. TMJ stands for temporomandibular joint, which is the hinge that connects the upper and lower jaws. TMJ disease owes its current vogue in some segments of the profession to the fact that almost anyone, given a little

magination, can be said to suffer from it. This fact suggests enormous possibilities to dentists bent on beefing up their practices, since they can add TMJ treatment to their stock of procedures without having to find new patients. The May 1981 issue of *JADA* carried an ad for

Long Island University continuing-education course called "How To Increase, Revitalize and Inflation-Proof Your Practice Through TMJ" (my italics). The same course was also described elsewhere as "The *only* TMJ seminar that will show you how to tap unused dental and medical insurance resources and build on your already-existing practice" (their italics).

TMJ disorder is not a single disease but at least half a dozen distinct conditions that produce pain in the face and jaw. These conditions can include osteoarthritis, trigeminal neuralgia, and sustained involuntary contraction of muscles in the face. The first of these is ordinary arthritis, the second is a neurological disorder, and the third is a myofascial syndrome that is apparently sex-linked (virtually all the people who have it are women). Despite the diversity of these ailments, TMJ dentists tend to treat them as though they were the same condition and as though they were caused by the same thing: a bad bite. Common treatments include pulling teeth, grinding down teeth, capping teeth, inserting removable "bite plates" to alter occlusion, and even drilling holes in jawbones. Most of these treatments are irreversible, all of them are expensive, and—according to Dr. Joseph Marbach, head of Columbia University's highly respected TMJ clinic and perhaps the country's leading researcher in the field of facial pain—none of them works.

"Numerous studies have demonstrated that these patients have a normal distribution of teeth when compared with the general population," says Dr. Marbach. "Nevertheless, the vast majority of facial-pain patients are treated exclusively or primarily by bite adjustment." Marbach favors conservative (and inexpensive) treatments based on drug therapy, exercise, and an informal sort of counseling to relieve the stresses and depression that can accompany chronic pain. He may also be the only dentist in the country who thinks dentists don't have any real business treating TMJ.

But dentists aren't likely to give up TMJ anytime soon. In the words of A. C. Fonder, editor of a curious journal called *Basal Facts* (The Official Journal of the American Academy for Functional Prosthodontics and the American Academy of Physiologic Dentistry), "Of which, along with *Basal Facts* itself and something called Doctor's Dental Service,

share an address in Chicago), TMJ treatment is "the hottest procedure in the dental field." It is also becoming a hot procedure in any number of other fields. Some dentists now claim that bite manipulation can cure not only facial pain but also curvature of the spine, emphysema, stuttering, numbness, paralysis, and open sores on ankles and scalp.

The ADA has yet to take a firm stand on TMJ. A three-day symposium on the subject is scheduled for the summer, but there is no reason to expect a substantial result. TMJ, like department-store dentistry, is too useful an employer of dentists to be dismissed out of hand. As a result, it tends to be considered largely in economic terms. "I think there's a lot of validity in the dentist's involvement in TMJ," says ADA president-elect Press. "Whether or not certain dentists are more entrepreneurial in marketing their program, in trying to capture an audience with certain catch phrases—that's just because they've talked to some guy from Madison Avenue, or had a better agent in putting together a brochure."

Dr. Press may be right. But there is still something unsettling about dentists who seem to be selling not so much a treatment as a disease.

No future in decay

ALL OF THIS runs counter to the disease-fighting tradition dentists have made for themselves. In comparison with other health-care professions, dentistry has been especially successful both in educating the public and in developing effective treatments for disease. Whether we pay attention or not, virtually all of us know how often to brush our teeth and what kind of snacks to avoid and when we're supposed to appear for a checkup. Dental scientists are now in the process of testing a vaccine that may conquer tooth decay altogether, an achievement that would be the dental equivalent of finding a cure for the common cold. Even in the absence of a vaccine, fluoride toothpastes and fluoridated water supplies have already brought about enormous reductions in decay, reductions that would not have been possible without the persistent prodding of dentists, who have championed fluoridation for decades. Treatment of dental disease in all areas has progressed to the point where some dentists say that tooth extraction in most cases ought to be considered malpractice.

In view of these achievements, dentists could plausibly be accused of trying to put themselves out of business. In the space of a very

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few decades, they have come close to eliminating the traditional mainstay of their livelihood. One dentist I talked to said that in the past it was not uncommon for children to appear for regular appointments with as many as ten new cavities. "Now," he said, "they come back and often it's just a checkup, everything's fine, and we'll see you next year." No one knows yet what will happen when these children reach adulthood. Will they send their own children to dentists? Will they go themselves? A child who makes it all the way to adulthood without a filling may decide that dentists aren't terribly important.

Dentists are quick to point out that tooth decay isn't the only, or even the most devastating, oral problem. Periodontal disease—which attacks the tissues that surround and support the teeth and which is popularly known as "gum disease"—is and always has been the leading cause of tooth loss in adults. In the future, dentists say, periodontal disease will replace tooth decay at the center of dental attention. To a certain extent the change has already begun: general practitioners, who have traditionally referred most periodontal cases to specialists, are now doing more and more of the work themselves; dental schools are beginning to shift the emphasis of instruction ever so slightly in the direction of periodontia; dentists who never paid much attention to the disease are learning about it now.

The "problem" with periodontal disease, from the dentist's point of view, is that although it can be prevented with careful oral hygiene, once it gets started it's very difficult to control. Treating it requires painstaking scraping of plaque beneath the gum line, combined with conscientious maintenance care by the patient himself, and sometimes surgery. Periodontal disease, in other words, is expensive, and dental patients fear expense even more than they fear pain. And because the disease typically begins in adolescence and progresses for years without tangible symptoms, there is no guarantee that the people who suffer from it will ever get around to visiting their dentists in the first place.

As decay replacements go, periodontal disease doesn't sound like a very sure bet. Even so, one gets the feeling that the future of the profession may depend on it.

ASK A PHYSICIAN whether medicine has a future and he'll laugh in your face; ask a dentist whether dentistry has a future and he'll give you a cautious,

reasoned reply.

"Dentistry will remain a profession for

which there is a need," Dr. Sidney L. Horowitz of the Columbia University dental school told me one afternoon. It was an extraordinary statement, all things considered. Have we patients got our dentists so intimidated that they actually wonder whether they deserve to exist? Is the entire profession contemplating suicide? "A physician friend of mine came over yesterday," says Marvin Schissel, "and we were talking about the cost of dental education and he said, 'You're lucky you're a dentist now, because in ten or fifteen years I don't think there'll be any dentists left.'" At a dental meeting in New York last year, Burton Press asked a roomful of dentists, "Do you think some dentists are going to end up like aerospace engineers?"

Of course, to describe a problem like this is necessarily to exaggerate it. Dentistry isn't about to fold up its tent and disappear. Nor is it locked in some great mad upheaval that will leave thousands of dentists hungry and homeless, their drill bits rusting in their employees' offices. As virtually any dentist will tell you there is enough untreated dental disease already in existence to keep the world's dentists busy from now until they all drop dead. ("Untreated dental disease" is the holy grail of the dental profession: dentists get sparks in their eyes when they talk about it.) Still, there are changes afoot in dentistry, changes that take together amount to something of a revolution.

"What we will see is a different emphasis in general dentistry, as has been the case for a number of years," says Dr. I. Lawrence Kerr, a practicing dentist in Endicott, New York, and a former president of the ADA. "We're talking more about periodontia, which is the least treated of all diseases in dentistry. In fact, I would say that only one or two percent of all periodontal disease is being treated. We are emphasizing more the concept of the total body: we're emphasizing jaw problems; we're talking to people more about nutrition—and we were way ahead of all the other professions when it came to nutrition, because we were so involved in dental decay. We talk to people more about muscle use, muscles of the face. We're talking more about the validity of vitamin therapy, if it is valid. We talk more about pain reduction, biofeedback. And like everybody else we're getting more into genetic counseling, because we have been able to step back a bit from just filling cavities to know that as a profession we've been trained to do a hell of a lot more."

There's not much mention of teeth in Dr. Kerr's catalogue of the future. But then, who ever said that being a dentist had anything to do with teeth?

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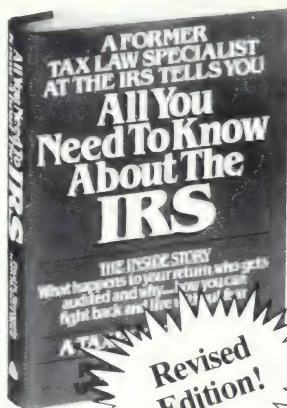
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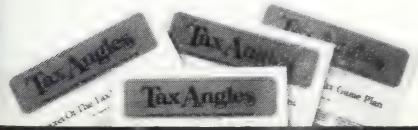
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The COUNTRY COOK

A story by Anne Tyler



CODY TULL always had a girlfriend, one girl after another, and all the girls were wild about him till they met his brother, Ezra. Something about Ezra just hooked their attention, it seemed. In his presence they took on a bright, sharp, arrested look, as if listening to a sound that others hadn't caught yet. Ezra didn't even notice this. Cody did, of course, although he never showed it. An Indian-faced man with smooth black hair, with level, balanced features, he could manage, when he tried, to seem perfectly blank, like a plaster clothing model. Meanwhile, his ragged, dirty, unloved younger self, with failing grades, with a U in deportment, clenched his fists and howled, "Why? Why always Ezra? Why that sissy pale goody-goody Ezra?"

But Ezra just gazed into space from behind his clear gray eyes, from under his shock of soft, fair hair, and went on thinking his private thoughts. You could say this for Ezra: he seemed honestly unaware of the effect he had on women. No one could accuse him of stealing them deliberately. But that made it all the worse, in a way.

Cody half believed that Ezra had some lack—a lack that worked in his favor, that made him immune, that set him apart from ordinary men. There was something almost monkish about him. Women never really managed to penetrate his meditations, although he was unfailingly courteous to them. He was likely to contemplate them in silence for an inappropriate length of time, and then ask something completely out of the blue. For instance: "How did you get those little gold circles through

your ears?" It was ridiculous—a man reached the age of twenty-seven without having heard of pierced ears. However, it must not have seemed ridiculous to the woman he was addressing. She raised a finger to an earlobe in startled, mesmerized way. She was spellbound. Was it Ezra's unexpectedness? The narrowness of his focus? Or his innocence, perhaps. He was a tourist on a female planet, was what he was saying. But he didn't realize he was saying it, and failed to understand the look she gave him. Or didn't care, if he did understand.

Only one of Cody's girlfriends had not been attracted to his brother. This was a social worker named Carol, or maybe Karen. Upon meeting Ezra, she had fixed him with a cold stare. Later, she had remarked to Cody that she disliked motherly men. "Always feeding, hovering," she said (for she'd met him at his restaurant), "but acting so clumsy and shy in the end it's *you* that takes care of *them*. Ever notice that?" However, she hardly counted; Cody had so soon afterward lost interest in her.

You might wonder why he went on making these introductions, considering his unfortunate experiences—the earliest dating from the year he turned fourteen, the latest as recent as a month ago. After all, he lived in New York City and his family lived in Baltimore; he didn't really have to bring these women home on weekends. In fact, he often swore that he would stop it. He would meet somebody, marry her, and not mention her even to his mother. But that would mean a lifetime of suspense. He'd keep watching his wife uncomfortably

Anne Tyler's ninth novel, *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*, will be published soon by Alfred A. Knopf.

suspiciously. He'd keep waiting for the inevitable—like Sleeping Beauty's parents, waiting for the needle that was bound to prick her finger in spite of their precautions.

He was thirty years old by now, successful in his business, certainly ready to marry. He considered his New York apartment temporary, a matter of minor convenience; he had recently purchased a farmhouse in Baltimore County with forty acres of land. Weekends, he traded his slim gray suit for corduroys and he roamed his property, making plans. There was a sunny backyard where his wife could have her kitchen garden. There were bedrooms waiting to be stocked with children. He felt rich and lordly. Poor Ezra: all he had was that disorganized restaurant, in the cramped, stunted center of the city.

Once, Cody invited Ezra to hunt rabbits with him in the woods behind the farm. It wasn't a success. First Ezra fell into a yellow jackets' nest. Then he got his rifle wet in the trench. And when they paused on a hilltop for lunch, he whipped out his battered recorder and commenced to tootling "Greensleeves," caring off all living creatures within a five-mile radius—which may have been his intention. Cody wasn't even talking to him, at the end; Ezra had to chatter on by himself. Cody talked well ahead of him in total silence, trying to remember why this outing had seemed such a good idea. Ezra sang "Mister Rabbit." "Every little soul," he sang, blissfully off key, "must shine, shine. . . ."

No wonder Cody was a cuticle-chewer, a loor-pacer, a hair-rummager. No wonder, when he slept at night, he ground his teeth so hard that his jaws ached every morning.

EARLY in the spring of 1960, his sister Jenny wrote him a letter. Her divorce was coming through in June, she said—two more months, and then she'd be free to marry Sam Wiley. *Though it looks,* he said, *as if Ezra might beat me down the aisle. Her name is Ruth but I don't know any more than that. . . .*

Cody tried to think of some other kind of aisle—airplane, supermarket, movie house—but in the end, he had to believe it: Ezra was getting married. Well, at least now Cody could keep his own girls. (This gave him, for some reason, a little twinge of uneasiness.) But Ezra, married? That walking accident? Imagine him at a formal wedding—forgetting license, ring, and responses, losing track of the service while milking out the window at a hummingbird. Imagine him in bed with a woman. (Cody mortified.)

He pictured the woman as dark and biblical, "No wonder because of her name: Ruth. Shadowed eyes and creamy skin. Torrents of loose black hair. Cody had a weakness for black-haired women: he didn't like blondes at all. He pictured her bare-shouldered, in a red satin nightgown, and he crumpled Jenny's letter roughly and dropped it in the wastebasket.

The next day at work, Ruth's image hung over him. He was doing a time-and-motion study of a power-drill factory in New Jersey. *Joining object K to object L: right-hand transport unloaded, search, grasp, transport loaded. . . .* He passed down the assembly line with his clipboard, attracting hostile glances. Ruth's black hair billowed in the rafters. *Unavoidable delays: 3. Avoidable delays: 9.* No doubt her eyes were plum-shaped, slightly tilted. No doubt her hands were heavily ringed, with long, oval fingernails painted scarlet.

When he returned to his apartment that evening, there was a letter from Ezra. It was an invitation to his restaurant this coming Saturday night. Oh, Lord, not another of Ezra's dinners. There would be toasts and a fumbling, sentimental speech leading up to some weighty announcement—in this case, his engagement. Cody thought of declining, but what good would that do? Ezra would be desolate if a single person were missing. He'd cancel the whole affair and reschedule it for later, and keep on rescheduling till Cody accepted. Cody might as well go and be done with it.

Besides, he wouldn't at all mind meeting this Ruth.

CODY followed Ezra to the far corner of the restaurant, where a RESERVED sign sat upon a table. Jenny and their mother weren't there yet. Jenny, who'd arrived on the afternoon train, had asked her mother's help in shopping for a dress to be married in. "I hope they won't be late," Ezra said. "We're having pot roast. What could be keeping them?"

"Well, no problem if it's only pot roast."

"It's not only pot roast," Ezra said. He sat in a chair. His suit had a way of waffling around him, as if purchased for a much larger man. "See, there's this cook, this real country cook, and pot roast is really not the right name for what she does. It's more like—"

"Here they come," Cody said.

Jenny and her mother were just walking across the dining room. Jenny's lipstick was chewed off. Pearl's hat was knocked crooked and her hair was frizzier than ever. "What took you so long?" Ezra asked, jumping up. "We were starting to worry."



"Oh, this Jenny and her notions," said Pearl. "Her size eight figure and no bright colors, no pastels, no gathers or puckers or trim, nothing to make her look fat, so-called . . . Why are there five places set?"

The question took them all off guard. It was true, Cody saw. There were five plates and five crystal wineglasses. "How come?" Pearl asked Ezra.

"Oh . . . I'll get to that in a minute. Have a seat, Mother."

But she kept standing. "Then at last we find just the right thing," she said. "A nice soft gray with a crocheted collar, Jenny all the way. 'It's you,' I tell her. And guess what she does. She has a tantrum in the middle of Hutzler's department store."

"Not a tantrum, Mother," Jenny told her. "I merely said—"

"Said, 'It isn't a funeral, Mother; I'm not going into mourning.' You'd think I'd chosen widow's weeds. This was a nice pale gray, very ladylike, very suitable for a second marriage."

"Anthracite," Jenny told Cody.

"Anthracite, was what the saleslady called it. In other words: coal. Our mother thinks it suitable to marry me off in a coal-black wedding dress."

"Uh," said Ezra, looking around at the other diners, "maybe we should be seated now."

But Pearl just stood straighter. "And then," she told her sons, "then, without the slightest bit of thought, doing it only to spite me, she goes rushing over to the nearest rack and pulls out something white as snow."

"It was cream-colored," Jenny said.

"Cream, white—what's the difference? 'I'll take this one,' she says, and it's not even the proper size, miles too big, had to be left at the store for alterations."

"I happened to like it," Jenny said.

"You were lost in it."

"It made me look thin."

"Maybe you could wear a shawl or something, brown," said her mother. "That might tone it down some."

"I can't wear a shawl at a wedding."

"Why not? Or a little jacket, say a brown linen jacket."

"I look fat in jackets."

"Not in a short one, Chanel-type."

"I hate Chanel."

"Well," said Pearl, "I can see that nothing will satisfy you."

"Mother," Jenny said, "I'm already satisfied. I'm satisfied with my cream-colored dress, just the way it is. I love it. Will you please just get off my back?"

"Did you hear that?" Pearl asked her sons.

"Well, I don't have to stand here and take it. And she turned and marched back across the dining room, erect as a little wind-up doll."

Ezra said. "Huh?"

Jenny opened a compact, looked into it, and then snapped it shut, as if merely making certain she was still there.

"Please, Jenny, won't you go after her?" Ezra asked.

"Not on your life."

"You're the one she fought with. I can persuade her."

"Oh, Ezra, let's for once just drop it," Cody said. "I don't think I'm up to all this."

"What are you saying? Not have dinner at all?"

"I'm on a diet, anyhow," Jenny told him.

"But this is important! It was going to be an occasion. Oh, just . . . wait. Wait here a minute, will you?"

Ezra turned and rushed off to the kitchen. He returned immediately with a small person in overalls. It was a girl, Cody guessed— weasel-faced little redhead. She followed Ezra jauntily, almost stiff-legged, wiping her palm on her backside. "I'd like you to meet Ruth," Ezra said.

Cody said, "Ruth?"

"We're getting married in September."

"Oh," said Cody.

Then Jenny said, "Well, congratulations, and kissed Ruth's bony, freckled cheek, and Cody said, "Uh, yes," and shook her hand. There were calluses like pebbles on her palm. "How do," she told him. He thought of the phrase "banty hen," although he had never seen a banty hen. Or maybe she was more of a rooster. Her brisk, carrotty hair was cut so short that it seemed too scant for her skull. Her blue eyes were round as marbles, and her skin was so thin and tight (as if, like her hair, it had been skimmed on) that he could see the white cartilage across the bridge of her nose. "So," he said, "Ruth."


He had the strangest feeling of loss. It was as if someone had died, or had left him for ever—the beautiful, black-haired Ruth of his dreams.



AT WORK that next week, charting the steps by which power drills were fitted into their housing, Cody watched the old, dark Ruth fade from the rafters and hallways, until at last she was completely gone and he forgot why she had moved him so. Now a new Ruth appeared. Skinny and boyish, overalls flapping around her shin bones, she raced giggling down the assembly line with Ezra hot on her heels. Ezra's hair

was tousled. (He was not immune at all, it appeared, but had only been waiting in his stubbornly trustful way for the proper person to arrive.) Ruth's lips were chapped and cracked. Her nails were bitten into tiny pink cushions and there were scrapes and burns across her knuckles, scars from her country cooking.

Cody called his mother and said he'd be home for the weekend. And would Ruth be around, did she think? After all, he said, it was time he got to know his future sister-in-law.

 HE ARRIVED on Saturday morning bringing flowers, copper-colored roses. He found Ruth and Ezra playing gin on the living-room floor. Ruth wore jeans and a shirt of some ugly brown plaid. She was so absorbed in her game that she hardly glanced up when Cody walked in. "Ruth," he said, and he held out the flowers. "These are for you."

She looked at them, and then drew a card. "What are they?" she asked.

"Well, roses."

"Roses? This early in the year?"

"Greenhouse roses. I especially ordered copper, to go with your hair."

"You leave my hair out of this," she said.

"Honey, he meant it as a compliment," Ezra told her.


"Oh."

"Certainly," said Cody. "See, it's my way of saying welcome. Welcome to our family, Ruth."

"Oh. Well, thanks."

"Cody, that was awfully nice of you," Ezra said.

"Gin," said Ruth.

 LATE that afternoon, when it was time to go to the restaurant, Cody walked over with Ruth and Ezra. It had been raining, off and on, and there were puddles on the sidewalk. Ruth strode straight through every one of them in her worn leather combat boots. Cody wondered if her style were deliberate. What would she do, for instance, if he gave her a pair of high-heeled evening sandals? The question began to fascinate him. He became obsessed; he developed an almost physical thirst for the sight of her blunt little feet in silver straps.

Ezra had his pearwood recorder. He played as he walked, serious and absorbed, with his lashes lowered on his cheeks. "Le Godiveau de Poisson," he played. Passersby looked at him and smiled. Then Ezra put his record-

er in the pocket of his shabby lumber jacket, and he and Ruth began discussing the menu. It was good they were serving the rice dish, Ruth said; that always made the Arab family happy. She ran her fingers through her sprouty red hair. Cody, walking on the other side of her, felt her shift of weight when Ezra circled her with one arm and pulled her close.

In the restaurant, she was a whirlwind. She spun and pounced and jabbed at a chicken casserole as if doing battle, while Cody watched her from a corner well out of the way. "Is this chicken some . . . regional thing?" he asked.

"Taste," she snapped, and she speared a piece and held it out to him.

"I can't," he said.

"Why not?"

"I feel too full."

In fact, he felt full of *her*. Every spiky movement—slam of pot lid, toss of head—nourished him. It came to him like a gift, while he was studying her narrow back, that she actually wore an undershirt, one of those knitted singlets he remembered from his childhood. He could make out the seams of it beneath the brown plaid. He filed the information with care, to be treasured once he was alone.

The restaurant opened and customers began to trickle in. The large, beaming hostess seated them all in one area, as if tucking them under her wing. Then, when the first real flurry was over, Ruth and Ezra settled at the scrubbed wooden table in the center of the kitchen, and Cody joined them. Ezra ate some of Ruth's chicken casserole. Ruth lit a small brown cigarette and tipped back in her chair to watch him. The cigarette smelled as if it were burning only by accident—like something spilled on the floor of an oven, or stuck to the underside of a saucepan. Cody, seated across from her, drank it in. "Eat, Cody, eat," Ezra urged him. Cody just shook his head, not wanting to lose his chestful of Ruth's smoke.

They left the restaurant before it closed. The others would lock up, Ezra said. They took a roundabout route home, down a quiet one-way street, to drop Ruth off at the house where she rented a room. When Ezra accompanied her up the front steps, Cody waited on the curb. He watched Ezra kiss her good-night—a bumbling, inadequate kiss, Cody judged it; and he felt some satisfaction. Then Ezra rejoined him and galumphed along beside him, big-footed and blithe. From time to time, he hummed a few bars of something underneath his breath. When they were almost home—passing houses totally dark, where everyone had long since gone to sleep—what should he do but pull out that damned recorder of his

"It was so typical: Ezra the golden boy, everybody's favorite."



and start piping away. It was embarrassing. It was infuriating: "Le Godiveau de Poisson," once again. Depend on Ezra, Cody thought, to have as his theme song a recipe for a seafood dish. He walked along in silence, hoping someone would call the police. Or at least that they'd open a window. "You there! Quiet!" But no one did. It was so typical: Ezra the golden boy, everybody's favorite, tootling down the streets scot-free.



HE FOLLOWING weekend, Cody drove Ruth out to see his farm. "I have seen all the farms I care to," she said, but Ezra said, "Oh, you ought to go, Ruth. It's pretty this time of year." Ezra himself had to stay behind; he was supervising the installation of a new meat locker for the restaurant. Cody had known that before he invited her.

This time he brought her jonquils. She said, "I don't know what I want with *these*; there's a whole mess in back by the walkway." Cody smiled at her.

He settled her in his Cadillac, which smelled of new leather. She looked unimpressed. Perversely, she was wearing a skirt, on the one occasion when jeans would have been more suitable. Her legs were very white, almost chalky. He had not seen short socks like hers since his school days, and her tattered sneakers were as small and stubby as a child's.

When they reached the farm he showed her around the grounds, where she stared a cow down and gave a clump of hens the evil eye. Then he led her into the house. He'd bought it lock, stock, and barrel—complete with rickety furniture and kerosene stove. "I do plan to fix things up," he told Ruth, "but I'm waiting till I marry. I know my wife might like to have a say in it."

Ruth removed a window lock easily from its crumbling wooden sash. She turned it over and peered at the underside.

"I want a wife very much," said Cody.

She put back the lock. "I hate to be the one to tell you," she said, "but smell that smell? Kind of sweetish smell? You got dry rot here."

"Ruth," he said, "do you dislike me for any reason?"

"Huh?"

"Your attitude. The way you put me off. You don't think much of me, do you?" he said.

She gave him an edgy, skewed look, evasive, and moved away. "Oh," she said, "I like you a fair amount."

"You do?"

"But I know your type," she said.

"What type?"

"There were plenty like you in my school," she said. "Oh, sure! Some in every class, on every team—tall and real good-looking, stylish, athletic, witty. *Smooth*-mannered boys that everything always came easy to, that a ways knew the proper way of doing things and never dated any but the cheerleader girls or the homecoming queen, or her maids of honor at the lowest. Passing me in the hall not even knowing who I was, nor guessing I existed. Or making fun of me sometimes. I'm almost certain—laughing at how poor I dressed and mocking my freckly face and my old red hair—"

"Laughing! When have I ever done such thing?"

"I'm not naming you in particular," she said, "but you sure do put me in mind of type."

"Ruth. I wouldn't mock you. I think you're perfect," he said. "You're the most beautiful woman I've ever laid eyes on."

"See there?" she asked, and she raised her chin, spun around, and marched out. She wouldn't answer anything else he said to her all during the long drive home.



T WAS a campaign, was what it was—long and arduous battle campaign, extending through April and all of May. There were moments when he despaired. He'd had too late a start, was out of the running he'd wasted his time with those unoriginal obvious brunettes whom he'd thought he was so clever to snare while Ezra, not even trying had somehow divined the real jewel. Luck Ezra! His whole *life* rested on luck, and Cody would probably never manage to figure out how he did it.

Often, after leaving Ruth, Cody would be muttering to himself as he strode away. He would slam a fist in his palm or kick his own car. But at the same time, he had an underlying sense of exhilaration. Yes, he would have to say that he'd never felt more alive, never more eager for each new day. Now he understood why he'd lost interest in Carol or Karen what's-her-name, the social worker who hadn't found Ezra appealing. She'd made it too easy. What he liked was the competition, the hop of emerging triumphant from a neck-and-neck struggle with Ezra, his oldest enemy. He even liked biding his time, hiding his feelings from Ruth till the most advantageous moment (Was *patience* Ezra's secret?) For of course this wasn't an open competition. One of the contestants didn't even know he *was* a contestant. "Gosh, Cody," Ezra said, "it's been

nice to have you around so much lately." And to Ruth. "Go, go; you'll enjoy it," when Cody invited her anywhere.

Once, baiting Ezra, Cody stole one of Ruth's brown cigarettes and smoked it in the farmhouse. He stubbed out the butt in a plastic ashtray beside his bed. Then later he invited Ezra to look at his new calves, took him upstairs to discuss a leak in the roof, and led him to the nightstand where the ashtray sat. But Ezra just said, "Oh, was Ruth here?" and launched into praise for an herb garden she was planting on top of the restaurant. Cody couldn't believe that anyone would be so blind, so credulous. Also, he would have died for the privilege of having Ruth plant herbs for him. He thought of the yard out back, where he'd always envisioned his wife's kitchen garden. Rosemary! Basil! Lemon balm!

Oiling his rifles that night, he seriously considered shooting Ezra through the heart.

When he complimented Ruth, she bristled. When he brought her the gifts he'd so craftily chosen (gold chains and crystal flasks of perfume, music boxes, silk flowers, all intended to contrast with the ugly, mottled marble rolling pin that Ezra presented, clumsily wrapped, on her twentieth birthday), she generally lost him right away or left them wherever she happened to be. And when he invited her places, she only came along for the outing. He would take her arm and she'd say, "Jeepers, 'm not some old lady." She would scramble over rocks and through forests in her combat boots, and Cody would follow, bemused and luzzled, literally sick with love.

He often found it difficult to keep their conversations going. It struck him sometimes—in the middle of the week, when he was far from Baltimore—that this whole idea was degraded. What single interest, even, did they have in common? But every weekend he was tagged, all over again, by her strutting walk, her belligerent chin and endearing scowl. He was moved by her musty, little-boyish mell; he imagined how her small body could nestle into his. Oh, it was Ruth herself they had in common. He would reach out to touch her spurs of her knuckles. She would ruffle and draw back. "What are you doing?" she would ask. He didn't answer.

SITTING in his New York apartment, Cody went through the day's mail. He scanned an ad for life insurance. He ripped open an envelope marked AMAZING OFFER! and found three stationery samples and a lousy order blank. One sample was blue, with LMR embossed at the top. Another had a lacy

PAULA, and the third was one of those letters that form their own envelopes when folded. The flap was printed with butterflies and MRS. HAROLD ALEXANDER III, 219 SAINT BEULAH BOULEVARD, DALLAS, TEXAS. He studied that for a moment. Then he took a pen from his shirt pocket and started writing in an unaccustomed, backhand slant:

Dear Ruth,

Just a line to say hey from all of us. How's the job going? What do you think of Baltimore? Harold says ask if you met a young man yet. He had the funniest dream last night, dreamed he saw you with someone tall, black hair and gray eyes and gray suit. I said well, I certainly hope it's a dream that comes true!

He signed the letter Luv, Sue (Mrs. Harold Alexander III) and sealed, stamped, and addressed it. Then he placed it in a business envelope and wrote a note to his old college roommate in Dallas, asking if he would please drop the enclosed in the nearest mailbox.

The next morning he began another letter, on the sheet headed PAULA. In a curlicued script, he wrote:

Dear Ruthie,

You old thing, don't you keep in touch with your friends anymore? I told Mama the other day, Mama that Ruth Spivey has forgotten all about us I believe.

Things here are not going too good. I guess you might have heard that me and Norman are separated. Ruthie stay clear of those pale blond thoughtful kind of men, they're a real disappointment. Go for someone dark and interesting who will take you lots of places you've never been. I'm serious, I know what I'm talking about.

See ya,
Paula

That letter he mailed from Pennsylvania, where he visited a packing-crate plant the following Tuesday. And on Wednesday, from New York, he sent the blue sheet with LMR at the top.

Dear Ruth,

Had lunch with Donna the other day and she told me you were going with a real nice fellow. Was kind of hazy on the particulars but when she said his name was Tull and he came from Baltimore I knew it must be Cody. Everybody here knows Cody, we all just love him, he really is a good man at heart and has been misjudged for years by people who don't understand him. Well, Ruthie, I guess you're smarter than I gave you credit for, I always thought you'd settle for one of those dime-a-dozen blond

"It began to seem he'd finally broken through; they were having a conversation."



types but now I see I was wrong.
I'll be waiting for the details.

Love,
Laurie May

"You went too far with that last letter," Ruth told him.

"I don't know what you're talking about." He was sitting on a kitchen stool, watching her cube meat. She slammed her cleaver on the chopping board. "Do you realize," she asked, "that I went ahead and answered that first note? Not wanting someone to worry, I sent it back and said it wasn't mine, there must be some mistake. And would've sent the second back, too, only it didn't have a return address. Then the third comes; well, you went too far."

"I tend to do that," Cody said regretfully.

Ruth slung the cleaver with a thunking sound. Cody was afraid the others—only a couple of salad boys, this early—would wonder what was wrong, but they didn't even look around. Ezra was out front, chalking up tonight's menu.

"Just what is your *problem*?" Ruth asked him. "Do you have something against me? You think I'm some Garrett County hick that you don't want marrying your brother?"

"Of course I don't want you marrying him," Cody said. "I love you."

"Huh?"

This wasn't the moment he had planned, but he rushed on anyway, as if drunk. "I mean it," he said, "I feel driven. I feel pulled. I have to have you. You're all I ever think about."

She was staring at him, astonished, with one hand cupped to scoop the meat cubes into a skillet.

"Ruth, I really, truly love you," he said. "I'm sick over you. I can't even eat. Look at me! I've lost eleven pounds."

He held out his arms, demonstrating. His jacket hung loose at the sides. Lately he'd moved his belt in a notch; his suits no longer fit so smoothly but seemed rumpled, gathered, bunched.

"It's true you're kind of skinny," Ruth said slowly.

"Even my shoes feel too big."

"What's the matter with you?" she asked.

"You haven't heard a word I said!"

"Over me, you said. You must be making fun."

"Ruth, I swear—" he said.

"You're used to New York City girls, models, actresses; you could have anyone."

"It's you I'll have."

She studied him a moment. It began to seem he'd finally broken through; they were having

a conversation. Then she said, "We got to get that weight back on you."

He groaned.

"See there?" she asked. "You never eat thing I offer you."

"I can't," he told her.

"I don't believe you ever once tasted my cooking."

She set the skillet aside and went over to the tall black kettle that was simmering on the stove. "Country vegetable soup," she said, lifting the lid.

"Really, Ruth . . ."

She filled a small crockery bowl and set it on the table. "Sit down," she said. "Eat. When you've tried it, I'll tell you the secret ingredient." Steam rose from the bowl, with a smell so deep and spicy that already he felt overfed. He accepted the spoon that she held out. He dipped it in the soup reluctantly and took a sip.

"Well?" she asked.

"It's very good," he said.

In fact, it was delicious, if you cared about such things. He took another mouthful. Ruth stood over him, her thumbs hooked into her blue-jean pockets. "Chicken feet," she said.

"Pardon?"

"Chicken feet is the secret ingredient."

He lowered the spoon and looked down into the bowl.

"Eat up," she told him. "Put some meat on your bones."

He dipped the spoon in again.

After that, she brought him a salad and a basketful of rolls—a recipe from home, she said. Cody ate everything. As long as he ate she watched him. When she brought him more butter for his rolls, she leaned close over him and he felt the warmth she gave off.


She sat down next to Cody, hooking her combat boots on the rung of his chair and hugging her ribs. Cody cut into a huge wedge of pie and gave some thought to food—to it inexplicable, loaded meaning in other people's lives. Couldn't you classify a person, he wondered, purely by examining his attitude toward food? Look at Cody's mother—a nonfeeder if ever there was one. Even back in his childhood, when they'd depended on her for nourishment . . . why, mention you were hungry and she'd suddenly act rushed and harassed, fretful, out of breath, distracted. He remembered her coming home from work in the evening and tearing irritably around the kitchen. Tins toppled out of the cupboards and fell all over—pork 'n' beans, Spam, oily tuna fish, peas canned olive-drab. She cooked in her half most of the time. She whimpered when she burned things. Her only seasonings were salt

nd pepper; her only gravy was Campbell's
ream of mushroom soup, undiluted. And till
ody was grown, he had assumed that roast
eef had to be stringy—not something you
liced, but a leathery dry object that you sepa-
rated with a fork, one strand from the other,
nd dropped with a clunk upon your plate.

Biting into Ruth's flaky, shattering piecrust,
ody considered his mother's three children
—Jenny, for instance, with her everlasting
jets. And Cody himself was not much differ-
nt, when you came right down to it. It seemed
at food didn't count with him; food was
omething required by others, so that for their
akes—on dates, at business luncheons—he
ould obligingly order a meal for himself just
o keep them company.

Yes, only Ezra, he would say, had managed
o escape all this. Ezra was so impervious—so
thickheaded, really; nothing ever touched
im. He ate heartily, whether it was his moth-
er's cooking or his own. He liked anything
that was offered him, especially bread—would
ave to watch his weight as he got older. But
rove all else, he was a feeder. He would set
dish before you and then stand there with
is face expectant, his hands clasped tightly
nder his chin, his eyes following your fork.
here was something tender, almost loving,
out his attitude toward people who were eat-
g what he'd cooked them.

Like Ruth, Cody thought.
He asked her for another slice of pie.

MORNINGS, now, he called from New
York, often getting her landlady out
of bed; and Ruth, when she an-
swered, was still creaky-voiced from
sleep—or was it from bewilderment, even now?
Reluctantly, each time, she warmed to his ques-
tions, speaking shortly at first. Yes, she was
fine. The restaurant was fine. Dinner last night
had gone well. And then (letting her sentences
stretch gradually longer, as if giving in to him
(over again)) she told him that this house
as starting to wear her down—creepy board-
ers padding around in their slippers at all
hours, no one ever going anywhere, landlady
anted eternally in front of her TV. This land-
lady, a widow, believed that Perry Como's
eyebrows quirked upward as they did because
was by nature a bass, and singing such high
notes gave him constant pain; she had heard
at Arthur Godfrey, too, had been enduring
stant pain for years, smiling a courageous
ile and wheeling about on his stool because
e slightest step would stab him like a knife.
es, everything, to Mrs. Pauling, was a con-
stant pain; life was a constant pain, and Ruth

had started looking around her and wonder-
ing how she stood this place.

Weekends—Friday and Saturday nights—
Ruth tore through the restaurant kitchen slap-
ping haunches of beef and whipping egg
whites. Ezra worked more quietly. Cody sat at
the wooden table. Now and then, Ruth would
place some new dish in front of him and Cody
would eat it dutifully. Every mouthful was a
declaration of love. Ruth knew that. She was
tense and watchful. She gave him sideways,
piercing glances when he forked up one of her
dumplings, and he was careful to leave nothing
on his plate.

Then on Sunday mornings, yellow summer
mornings at her boardinghouse, he rang her
doorbell and pulled her close to him when she
answered. Any time he kissed her, he was vis-
ited by the curious impression that some other
self of hers was still moving through the house
behind her, spunky and lighthearted and un-
catchable even yet, checking under pot lids,
slamming cupboard doors, humming and toss-
ing her head and wiping her hands on her
blue jeans.



"DON'T understand," Ezra told them.

"Let me start over," said Cody.

Ezra said, "Is this some kind of a joke?"

"Is that what it is? What is it?"

"Ruth and I—" Cody began.

But Ruth said, "Ezra, honey. Listen." She
stepped forward. She was wearing the navy
suit that Cody had bought her to go away in,
and high-heeled shoes with slender straps. Her
freckles stood out sharply. She said, "Ezra,
we surely never planned on this. We never had
the least intention, not me or Cody neither
one."

Ezra waited, evidently still not comprehend-
ing. He was backed against the huge old res-
taurant stove, as if retreating from their news.

"It just happened, like," said Ruth.

"You don't know what you're saying," said
Ezra.

"Ezra, honey—"

"You would never do this. It's not true."

"See, I don't know how it came about but
me and Cody... and I should've told you
sooner but I kept thinking, oh, this is just
some... I mean, this is silly; he's so sophis-
ticated, he isn't someone for me; this is just
some... daydream, see..."

"There's bound to be an explanation," Ezra
said.

"I feel real bad about it, Ezra."

"I'm sure I'll understand in a minute," he
said. "Just give me time. Just wait a minute.
Let me think it through."

**"Ezra was so
impervious—
so thickheaded,
really; nothing
ever touched
him."**



They waited, but he didn't say anything more. He pressed two fingers against his forehead, as if working out some complicated puzzle. After a while, Cody touched Ruth's arm. She said, "Well, Ezra, goodbye, I guess." Then she and Cody left.

In the car, she cried a little—not making any fuss but sniffing quietly and keeping her face turned toward the side window. "Are you all right?" Cody asked.

She nodded.

"You're sure you still want to go on with this?"

She nodded again. She took off one of her gloves, already gray at the seams, and crumpled it into a ball and blotted both her eyes.

Near Penn Station, Cody found a parking lot that offered weekly rates. It was a good deal of trouble, traveling by train, but worth it for Ruth's sake; she'd never set foot on a train before. She was already perking up. She asked him if he thought there'd be a dining car—an "eating car," she called it. Cody said he imagined so. He accepted the ticket the parking attendant gave him and slid out from behind the steering wheel, grunting a little; lately he'd put on a few pounds around the waist. He took Ruth's suitcase from the trunk. Ruth wasn't used to high heels and she hobbled along unsteadily. "I hope to get the knack of these things before long," she told Cody.

"You don't have to wear them, you know."

"Oh, I surely *do*," she said.

Cody guided her into the station. The sudden, echoing coolness seemed to stun her into silence. She stood looking around her while Cody went to the ticket line. A plump young woman stopped to smile at him, holding a child by the hand. "Cody Tull!" she said.

"Um—"

"I'm Jane Lowry. Remember me?"

"Oh, Jane! Jane Lowry! Well, good to see you, how nice to . . . and is this your little girl?"

"Yes, say hello to Mr. Tull, Betsy. Mr. Tull and Mommy used to go to school together."

Cody said, "Well, what a—"

"Remember the day I came to visit you, uninvited?" she asked. She laughed, and he saw, in the tilt of her head, a flash of the young girl he had known. She lived on Bushnell Street, he remembered now; she had had the most beautiful hair, which still showed its chips of gold light although she wore it short now.

"I had such a crush on you," she said.

"Lord, I made a total fool of myself."

"You played a game of checkers with Ezra," he reminded her.

"Ezra?"

"My brother."

"You had a brother?"

"I certainly did; do. You played checkers with him all afternoon."

"How funny; I thought you only had a sister. What was her name? Jenny. But I'd forgotten you had a brother."

Cody opened his mouth to speak, but it was his turn at the window. And by the time he bought his tickets, Jane was gone.

He didn't see her again—though he looked for her on the train—but it was odd how she plunged him into the past. Swaying on the seat next to Ruth, holding her small, rough hand but finding very little to say to her, he was startled by fragments of buried memories. The scent of chalk in geometry class; the balmy, laden feeling of the last day of school every spring; the crack of a baseball bat on the playground. He found himself in a summer evening at a drive-in hamburger stand with its blinding lights surrounded by darkness, its hot, salty smell of French fries, and all his friends horsing around at the curb. He could hear an old girlfriend from years ago her droning, dissatisfied voice: "You ask me to the movies and I say yes and then you change your mind and ask me bowling instead and I say yes to that but you say wait, let me make it another night, as if anything you can have is something it turns out you don't want . . ." He heard his mother telling Jenny not to slouch, telling Cody not to swear, asking Ezra why he wouldn't stand up to the neighborhood bully. "I'm trying to get through life as a liquid," Ezra had said, and Cody (trying to get through life as a rock) had laughed; he could hear himself still. "Why aren't cucumbers prickly anymore?" he heard Ezra ask. And, "Cody? Don't you want to wait to school with me?" He saw Ezra aiming a red-feathered dart, his chapped, childish wrists awkwardly angled; he saw him running for the telephone—"I'll get it! I'll get it!"—hopeful and joyous, years and years younger. He remembered Carol, or was it Karen, reciting Ezra's faults—a *motherly* man, she'd said what had she said?—and it occurred to him that the reason he had dropped her was she really hadn't understood Ezra; she hadn't appreciated what he was all about. Then Ruth squeezed his hand and said, "I intend to ride trains forever; it's so much better than the bus. Isn't it, Cody? Cody? Isn't it?" The train rounded a curve with a high, thin, whistling sound that took him by surprise. He honestly believed, for an instant, that what he'd hear was music—a tune piped, a burble of notes, a little scrap of melody floating by on the wind and breaking his heart.



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What are our doctors and lawyers wearing away from the thyroids and codicils to which they generally present themselves in the stern luxury of Brooks Brothers suits? Work clothes! Denim and other previously labor-oriented fibers are what swath the sort of off-duty Americans who get from A to B in German luxury cars.

At a recent gathering of these highly trained, highly motivated, highly recompensed sorts, there was so much denim it looked as if the sky had fallen. Anesthesiologists, corporate giants, the lordliest ambulance chasers, most revered surgeons, cash-impacted orthodontists, and soundest bankers all appeared in that blue cloth that was once shunned as the badge of being badgeless.

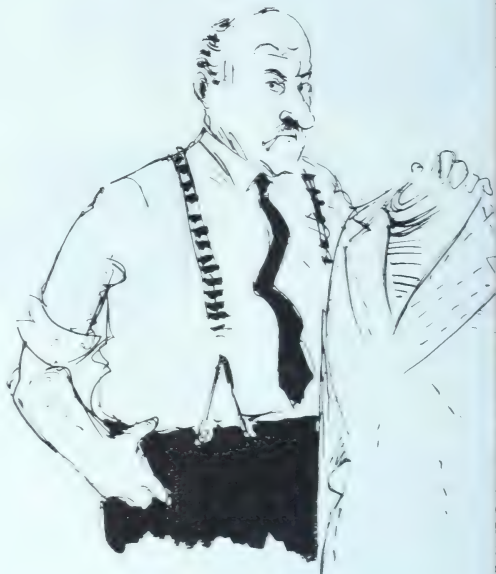
To get a handle on the phenomenon that has put the dungaree industry in the sort of economic pants big steel wears, we contacted certain observers, bystanders, and specialists for observations, insights, and angles on the sartorial humility boom.



GUY LAPWING—SOCIAL OBSERVER

Well, *denim*. Anything light blue is neat because it's informal. What could be more informal than, you know, labor? I mean the people who pick the things we eat are the *soul* of informality. So it's exactly the karma for entertaining now.

All the furniture and wallpaper now is very, very natural and casual: shrubby. You know, bamboo, beachy beige—the organic textures. The interior-decorating statement now is *intensely* environmental. I mean *forget* the chrome-and-glass number. We're out of the hospital as well as the closet. We're *natural*: seashells and undyed linen and big salads—so it's obvious what we wear should also be sort of harvesty—don't you think?



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It's a plague. A curse! You remember when your barbers went crazy because every jerk in the U.S.A. just let his hair grow its head off? Well, now it's our turn, the tailors, it's us squeezing the crying towel. Respectable gentlemen—college educated—the men who manipulate the stock market and remove infectious organs from our bodies—they want to dress like janitors!

I spent eleven years' apprenticeship to a tyrant so I could make a lapel lie as smooth as a politician, so I could make a pair of trousers hang like politicians should—and what happens? My clientele leaves me to go to the Army-Navy store! I blame our politicians.

INDIA, INC.

ullabaloo over Merchant-Ivory pictures.

by Barbara Grizzuti Harrison

INDIA, says a character in *Travelers*, a novel by Ruth Praver Jhabvala, "is not a place that one can pick up and put down if nothing had happened. . . . It's not so much a country as an experience, and whether it turns out to be good one or a bad one depends I suppose on oneself."

"What a place it is for falling in love!" says a character in the film *ullabaloo Over Georgie and Bonny's Pictures*, for which Jhabvala wrote the screenplay, and that is the problem for most foreigners: it's perfectly possible to fall in love with India, and to feel revulsion—hatred for it simultaneously, certainly within the space of one day.

For example, the day I read a Jhabvala short story in a glossy illustrated Indian magazine. I was sitting in Bombay. The night before, I been to a party (so far as I could make out—I was new to India—the tree equivalent of a bar mitzvah): mango trees were strung with fairy lights; the smell of spicy food mingled with the smell of jasmine; graceful people were as exquisitely courteous as they were exquisitely jeweled; and naturally I loved India, all its sensual delights. In the morning I went to the bazaar, where I bought packets of brilliantly colored powder—purple, magenta, red, fuchsia, yellow—not knowing what I intended for them. And I bought perfume oil in beautiful small amber and ruby vials

with perfectly fitted brass tops, bananas and prawns, colic water for my baby, and two Penguins, Ved Mehta's *Face to Face* and Dorothy Sayers's *Gaudy Night*.

I came home to a flat sublet from missionaries, who had tried, with spectacular lack of success, to recreate a corner of England in a block of flats that seemed to be inhabited almost entirely by shabby-genteel OBEs whose fortunes were on the decline (as were the flats). Outside my door I found a holy man, naked and erect. I went to the pantry to make tea, and there I found our bearer (inherited from the missionaries) asleep, and I also found three rats, eating grain from a dish thoughtfully provided by the bearer. My presence disturbed neither bearer nor rats. I retreated to the sitting room, had what the missionaries would have called a good cry, and among dreary religious tracts found Jhabvala's short story. After I read it, I felt restored to sanity—and very grateful to Jhabvala, whose own transparent sanity had a calming and steadying effect on me, giving me the illusion that I too might some day "understand" India.

I never did. But I know enough about India to know when someone's faking it. (*Siddhartha* and *Nine Hours to Rama* are two dismal examples of Hollywood's attempts to come to grips with the subcontinent; they are both silly and flatulent.) I also know enough to know when someone's telling the truth, or, more precisely, a truth about India. Satyajit Ray's films about India are truth-telling; and so are films produced by Ismail

Merchant, directed by James Ivory, and written by Ruth Praver Jhabvala.

TWENTY years ago in New York City, a brash young film producer from Bombay met a precocious young filmmaker from a small town in Oregon, and together they went to New Delhi to court an expatriate Polish-Jewish writer whose first novel they wished to turn into a movie. Eight weeks after Ismail Merchant and James Ivory met Ruth Jhabvala, they had a finished screenplay; a year later *The Householder* opened to critical acclaim.

This year, by way of celebrating their twentieth anniversary together, Merchant, Ivory, and Jhabvala have returned to India to film Jhabvala's latest novel, *Heat and Dust*, the story of a woman who leaves her decent, cool British husband for a capricious, sensual, enigmatic Indian prince, and of her granddaughter, who tries to understand why she has done so—who tries, that is, to understand India, the relationship of ruler to ruled.

MERCHANT-IVORY Productions have made, over the course of twenty years, thirteen full-length feature films. The first to bring this independent production company a devoted audience was *Shakespeare Wallah*, a gentle, lyrical, acute film about a rag-tag group of English actors who stayed on too long in postimperial India, hawking their wares—the plays

Barbara Grizzuti Harrison is the author of *Clones of Glory: A History and a Memory of Jehovah's Witnesses and Off Center, a collection of essays (Dial).*

MOVIES

of Shakespeare, for which Indian audiences now have little use. Ismail Merchant discovered a group of itinerant players in India, immediately saw the pathos, gallantry, and disjunction inherent in their situation, and persuaded Ruth Praver Jhabvala to write a screenplay about a company of actors who find themselves unwanted in the only real home they have ever known; the actors Merchant found played themselves. Here is a fine example of life imitating art: Jhabvala concluded her screenplay with the youngest member of the troupe, fourteen-year-old Felicity Kendall, sailing to England, the "home" she'd never seen: almost as soon as the film was shot, Kendall actually embarked for England. (Sixteen years later, she is starring in a very funny British television series, "The Good Neighbors," on PBS.)

India is the ground on which Merchant, Ivory, and Jhabvala met; it is a persistent theme in their conversation and in their lives and work. But not all the films they've made in the course of twenty years take place in India. Set all over the globe, they deal, almost always, with coexisting wild extremes, with the collision of cultures, with decaying cultures, with societies—and with people—who have come to an end of themselves. Most are autumnal and introspective. ("With the same material," Merchant says, "Spielberg would rip the screen apart.") Some, like their latest, *Jane Austen in Manhattan*, are literary almost to a fault. No *Jaws*, no blockbusters, few concessions to popular tastes. So it is not a little surprising that Merchant's backers—lumber merchants and shrimp exporters as well as Volkswagen and a publishing conglomerate—stand, "nine times out of ten," according to Merchant, to make "a modest profit." In fact, *The Europeans*, based on the novel by Henry James, was made for \$777,000—\$50,000 under budget, and broke box-office records at London's Curzon Theatre, where it ran for months. It was the fifteenth top-grossing film in New York in 1979, and was Britain's official entry at the Cannes Film Festival.

Merchant-Ivory Productions has

survived troubles with labor unions (the production of *Roseland*, in which director Ivory used genuine dance-hall habitués as well as extras, almost came to a halt because of the demands of the Screen Actors' Guild, a problem endemic to filmmakers working with a small budget), with large movie companies (American-International Pictures edited *The Wild Party*, with Raquel Welch and James Coco, beyond recognition), and with some critics—Pauline Kael, for example (Ivory says their films aren't "noisy" enough for her).

When Merchant and Ivory made their first American film, *Savages*, a parable about civilization and savagery, most reviewers said (in Ivory's words), "Oh, my God, why don't you go back to India and make those nice little Indian films you used to make?" *Savages* (one Merchant-Ivory production for which Jhabvala did not write the screenplay) caught most people off balance. It opens with a sepia-colored scene of a primitive tribe of masked "mud people" intent on human sacrifice. After a croquet ball lands in their midst, they find their way, in sumptuous technicolor, to a Gatsby-style Scarsdale mansion where they evolve into "civilized" beings. They wear the "masks" of civilization only briefly before they fall from what we are not intended to believe is a state of

grace into such carelessness and debauchery as is tantamount to savagery; the circle is completed. A kinds of cranky, witty business into this film: the primitive girl who licks a painting of a young boy the mansion, for instance (one Ivory's hallmarks is to give inanimate objects a life of their own), the savage-turned-chic-and-civilized who practices "blitology"—she for tells the future by consulting too mushy spots on decaying fruit; real no more ludicrous than tarot cards. But most moviegoers didn't know quite how seriously to take *Savages*. Back to India, the critics said; please back to movies like *The Guru*, *Shakespeare Wallah*, and *Bombay Talkie*.

Roseland—a film about dance-hall geriatrics and hustlers with more tarnished ambition and inflated illusions than talent—was Merchant and Ivory's third American film (the screenplay was written by Jhabvala; it was respectfully reviewed. *The Europeans*, on which all three friends again collaborated, starred Lee Remick and gained for Merchant-Ivory Productions a wide American audience, as did *Quartet*, a 1920s period piece from a novel by Jean Rhys, starring Isabelle Adjani, Maggie Smith, and Alan Bates. By the time *Quartet* was released, in 1981, most critics were pleased to see Merchant, Ivory, and Jhabvala as into



Isabelle Adjani and Maggie Smith in *Quartet* (1981), directed by James Ivory from a script by Ruth Praver Jhabvala.

tional, not Indian, filmmakers. Most Indian critics, however, don't see those "nice little Indian films"—they reproach Merchant and Ivory d Jhabvala for bringing a foreign nsibility to bear on the subcon- ception of Satyajit Ray, who helped it the trio's first film, *The House- holder*, and who wrote the music for I know no filmmakers who under- and the paradoxes of India, its ex- mes of beauty and squalor, pov- y and wealth, as well as Merchant, ury, and Jhabvala.) In spite of erything, they continue to increase ir audiences here and abroad, to n awards, and to get richer. They e an anomaly in the film industry. Merchant, who is as charming as any man is allowed to be without being pected of superficiality or sub- fuge, claims to have beaten the stem—and to have incurred wrath ause "we've gotten away with ing what appeals to us without ard to trends." Ivory, who fre- quently qualifies Merchant's exuber- outpourings, says dryly, "Maybe haven't beat it enough. We're not ite arty and we're not quite com- ical. . . . It takes years and years anybody to like you if you're ferent." "Our films are gentle," Merchant says. "Not all that gentle," ury says. "If they were, they uldn't be abrading so many peo- ." (And Jhabvala, listening to this hange between the two men, char- acteristically says nothing: she has ook of a woman who thinks four ople in a room are two too many.)

SMAIL MERCHANT grew up in Bombay, where film actors and actresses are treated like royalty, almost like gods—probably be- cause they disport themselves like ls in garish and tumultuous Hindi is, which are hours long and ich combine melodrama with song l dance and sagas of Indian war- s... everything, in fact, but es, which India's censors won't ow. When Merchant was six years , his mother took him to see a ger from a courtesan family in ra. "There were two sisters, Sha- b and Nawob. When partition

came, Nawob moved to Pakistan and Shabob to Bombay. Shabob's songs were everywhere—you couldn't go to the bazaar without hearing her sing, you couldn't walk anywhere without hearing her sing." Shabob became an actress and a good friend of Merchant's family; Merchant be- came "almost her companion." He spent more time at movie studios than he did at school. When he did go to school, he brought Bombay stars with him, and—an entrepreneur at an early age—he frequently ar- ranged for one of Bombay's reigning gods or goddesses to appear in school productions. (His resulting popular- ity may account for his sanguine nature: it never in later life occurred to Merchant that he might not get financing for a production.) The stars to whom he was most drawn were not those of the Hindi epics. Oddly, perhaps, for a man who was later to make movies that he calls "stamped with tranquillity," he was besotted by "M-G-M types—Susan Hayward, Vivien Leigh, Katharine Hepburn, Clark Gable, Cary Grant." Almost every day, with two of his friends, Merchant went to the movies. They had money for only one ticket, so they took turns, each of them seeing a different part of the film each day they went.

By the time he'd left India, at nineteen, to study business admin- istration at New York University, Ismail had seen only three European films—De Sica's *The Bicycle Thief*, Clouzot's *Wages of Fear*, and Renoir's *The River*. When he was twenty-one he made a film about Indian dancers, called *The Creation of Woman*; it was nominated for an Academy Award. He was working then at McCann, Erickson; he had worked before as a guide with the Indian delegation to the United Nations, a position he exploited to the hilt. He took prospective backers to lunch at the Delegates' Lounge and allowed them to believe that he was secretary to the Indian mission to the U.N. To this day there are people who believe Merchant was once a career diplomat.

Merchant heard about Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's first novel from a screen- writer in the M-G-M commissary. The studio of Merchant's adolescent fan-

tasies would never, of course, have considered making a movie of *The Householder*, a limpid, quiet story of the vicissitudes of an arranged marriage between a poor clerk and a simple Indian girl. But Merchant was determined to film it. He had not yet met James Ivory.

ALL THIS about Merchant's past I learned in Ivory's twelfth-floor apartment in a building on New York's Upper East Side. Merchant has a sepa- rate apartment on the twelfth floor; and Jhabvala has an apartment on the floor above. Ivory's apartment is minimally but elegantly furnished—beautiful and discreet Moghul mini- atures on the walls; Merchant's apartment is vibrant with Indian folk art; and Jhabvala's apartment is as quiet as she is—in fact I have trouble remembering what it looks like (she, on the other hand, notices and reg- isters everything, including, to my embarrassment, my using Indian *divali* lamps as ashtrays in my apart- ment: "Isn't it odd how foreigners like Indian things so much?" she says; meaning God knows what).

Merchant and Ivory were cooking dinner, using produce from a garden in Columbia County, upper New York State, where Merchant, Ivory, and Jhabvala share a house. One might think that the three friends and co-workers had long since ex- hausted their knowledge of one an- other. Not so. Jhabvala, whose voice is a murmur, interrupts Merchant from time to time: "Did your family frame your degree? Is it still there?" (Her questions stem from the exces- sive regard Indians have for univer- sity degrees: in matrimonial ads in the *Times of India*, it is not unusual to see "Failed B.A." listed among a man's other virtues; even to have aspired to a degree enhances his chances for a good marriage.) When Merchant talked about his dislike of *The River* (from the book by Rumer Godden, set in Bengal), Ivory im- mediately took issue with him: their quarrel was as fresh as if they'd known each other only twenty days. It was also conducted with exquisite courtesy on both sides.

JAMES IVORY is dry, economical, opinionated, a perfect complement for extroverted, forbearing Merchant. When Merchant met him, Ivory had produced, photographed, and written three documentaries—one on Venice, one on Delhi, and one, *The Sword and the Flute*, on Rajput and Moghul miniature paintings. Merchant went to see *The Sword and the Flute* at India House, had coffee with Ivory—who took to him immediately, as most people do—and soon they were on their way to Delhi to meet Ruth Prawer Jhabvala.

Ivory, who is urbane and elegant, says in his cool, crisp way that India is "overwhelming, beckoning. I'd never have gone back to Italy, it didn't satisfy my cravings; maybe it was too tame for me. India stirred me up. I never felt about India that it was a riddle, that the ways of Indians were strange, unfathomable; no, I never felt like that." This may explain why Ivory's Indian films, all of which are intensely personal microcosms of life on the subcontinent, never attempt to "define" India, its spirituality and its politics—and also why they succeed in being more universal than other, more apparently ambitious, films.

Ivory, who is fifty-three (Merchant is forty-four and Jhabvala is fifty-four), never wanted to do anything but make films. He was totally undiscriminating when he grew up in Klamath Falls, Oregon; he liked lavish Forties musicals, historical movies—everything he saw. He saw everything: there were four first-run theaters in the town of 16,000, one theater that showed only cowboy films, and another that showed reruns. While Merchant was listening to courtesans in Bombay, Ivory belonged to the Popeye Club in Klamath Falls: every Saturday morning he saw a Popeye movie, a Lone Ranger serial, and two comedies.

"People assume I go only to arty films," Ivory says, "but that isn't true. I'll tell you something that may sound terrible. I'm not very much moved by films; very rarely do they get through to me in an emotional sense. Movies rarely have the power to move me, except as choreography

does—I like the movement. I mean, there's something about certain kinds of movies that takes you out of yourself and whirled you around a bit; I like that, but it isn't the same as being moved by human emotions or social issues. For example, something about the way a film like *The Deer Hunter* is put together sort of sucks you into it, a kind of physicality draws you in. . . . I didn't for a minute think about its fidelity to the facts of the Vietnam war, that kind of thing never concerns me—bad technique does, bad editing, bad transitions." And, perhaps most of all, bad cinematography: Ivory's films are so gorgeously tactile, filmed with such a scrupulous and loving eye for detail, one often wishes to fall into them.

Some Ivory-Merchant films—their non-Indian films—have been criticized for being too cool, static, and perversely unemotional. Their latest film, *Quartet*, was criticized on the grounds that it was impossible to imagine Isabelle Adjani contemplating suicide amid all the sumptuous art-deco *objets* that Ivory—who is a master of ambience—surrounded her with. (Adjani won an award at Cannes for her portrayal of the waif-like, exploitable, and exploited drifter modeled after Jean Rhys.) Another American critic said the film moved so slowly that the characters sounded as if English were their second language. And some filmgoers have found Merchant-Ivory's casting not to their liking; the male second leads are not always unambiguously masculine.

Sometimes their films have the defects of their virtues: they had so much respect for the integrity of their characters in *Jane Austen in Manhattan*—in which rival theater companies fight for the right to produce a newly discovered manuscript by Austen—I felt as if the cast were acting at a third remove from me, protecting their privacy from the audience.

When he talks about American critics, Ivory crackles. He objects not so much to bad reviews—he doesn't expect to be understood always, he says laconically (and he remembers all reviews, favorable or

scathing, that are well written). Even he does expect good manner. "There's an extraordinary situation in this country. In England, there are only four screenings for any picture, *Star Wars* or *Shakespeare Walla*. English critics are disciplined. Whether he's from the smallest newspaper or *The Times*, a critic is in time and in his place when the light goes down. Whereas in America, if an influential critic—say from *Time* magazine—feels disinclined to attend a screening, you're obliged to set one up just for him, at a cost to the producer of \$250 a screening."

If Ivory believes American critics have been corrupted by their power, he reserves his full contempt for large film companies, and in particular for American-International Pictures, which co-financed *The Wild Party* and which he accuses of de facto censorship. American-International had the final cut of *The Wild Party* (on which Jhabvala did no work); they edited it so drastically that Ivory disowned it. Based on a 1926 poem by Joseph Moncure March, *The Wild Party*, set in 1921 Hollywood, is the story of the decline and fall of Jolly Grimm (James Coco, a star of silent pictures who threw a party to woo support for his comeback movie. His bash coincides with a party at Pickfair; and what happens is what would happen if South Seas gave a party on the same night that Robert Redford and Jane Fonda gave parties. Nobody important shows up, and Jolly finds himself surrounded by other sad leftovers. The result is debauchery, mayhem, and murder.

Ivory says *The Wild Party* was "meant to be taken seriously—but not so seriously that there was no room for the songs and dances that are an outgrowth of the party's natural action and that were intended to lighten the mood." American-International chose to identify *The Wild Party* with the nasty Falstaff story ("A Night of G. Sin, and a Night they're still whispering about!"); they tried, at the same time, to make Coco more "likeable"—and this necessitated cutting many of his scenes with Raquel Welch, as well as a dazzling scene

nd-dance number by Welch. The erosion edited by American-International is messy, repellent, and farcical. Ivory is still bitter.

JUST AS she never goes to the offices of *The New Yorker*, which publishes her short stories, Ruth Praver Jhabvala leaves the financing of her films to Merchant and Ivory. A slim, soft-spoken woman with a marked Anglo-Indian accent, Jhabvala has had her books compared to Jane Austen's. She sees with merciless clarity, and writes with wit and detached fondness of human foibles—of which she has seen more than her share. Married to a Parsee architect, she has three daughters, one of whom is a trade-union organizer in Delhi. Her husband, who maintains offices in New Delhi, commutes between two continents. Jhabvala is both rootless and cosmopolitan, at home in Delhi, London, and New York—and she would have it no other way: "I have no national identity," she says. "I wouldn't have one for anything. I'm free this way." Born in Germany of a Polish father and a German mother, she left for England and safety in 1939. She feels, she has said, "disinherited even my own childhood memories . . . a writer without any ground of being out of which to write: really blown out from country to country, culture to culture, till I feel—till I am nothing. . . . I like it that way. It's made me a cuckoo forever insinuating myself into others' nests. Or aameleon hiding myself in false or rowed colors." She does tend to melt into the background; her assumed color appears to be dun. But she is a woman to be contended with: like Jane Baxter, who stars in *Jane Austen in Manhattan*, calls Jhabvala the *cuisse-café* of screenwriters—layers and layers beneath the meek and mild exterior.

Jhabvala says she went to India "blind" and without fear, blank and prepared; if her husband had happened to live in Africa, she'd have gone there equally blindly. She was forty-four when she arrived in India; she was stunned, overwhelmed by all the sights and sounds. She

loved everything—even the beggars, the poverty, didn't bother her then. "It was life as one read about it in the Bible: whole, I thought; pure." She felt like that for ten years—ten years of "delight and immersion."

After her first ten years in India, no longer simply accepting, Jhabvala began to struggle against all the things people have to struggle against in India—"the tide of poverty, disease and squalor all around, the heat—the frayed nerves; the strange, alien, often inexplicable, often maddening, Indian character. All the things that make Europeans into sahibs and (worse) memsahibs out there." She became, she says, "closed up." She began to loathe the swamis she had once venerated. She deplored the fatuous American girls who came to India for spiritual enlightenment.

All these themes she has explored relentlessly, in her books and in her screenplays. Certain themes recur, certain characters are recycled: the randy guru, the frightened memsahib who loves India too much and hates India too much, the foreigners who demand of India that they transform it or it transform them, the rapaciousness of travelers who want India to yield to them, to offer up its spiritual and material riches.

And now, after twenty-five years on the subcontinent, she is in New York, which, in its cruelty and hard beauty, is as "bizarre" to her as India was bizarre to her, as enormous and polyglot and coarse and stimulating.

The screenplays she has written about New York—*Roseland* and *Jane Austen in Manhattan*—both have to do with desperate people, as desperate, in their own ways, as the beggars of New Delhi.

THEY ARE so different, yet the three of them need one another. Merchant says: "We are three people fighting for what we believe; together we are a power." (Jhabvala smiles.) "Sometimes I wonder," Merchant says, "have we become isolated? But I don't feel guilty about monopolizing Ruth's talent—she could of course work with someone else, as Jim has."

Jhabvala says, "Well, we each do something so different. So it works." "Yes," Ivory says, "but sometimes our functions overlap. We help each other out in little ways." (Jhabvala demurs: "Like what?" she asks.)

In fact they quarrel fiercely. When they made *Autobiography of a Princess*, Merchant signed James Mason to star, without Jhabvala's consent. She was furious, as was Madhur Jaffrey, the female lead. Wires hummed between continents. As it turned out, Mason was the perfect incarnation of Jhabvala's character.

The story of how they got to make *Autobiography* (which was shown on PBS) is worth telling: Ivory and Merchant had it in mind to make a film about the princesses of Rajasthan. At the same time, Jhabvala was obsessed with people who stayed on in India too long (long after India had ceased to delight them), in a kind of terminal ennui. She was writing *Heat and Dust*, which has a minor character who is a secretary-companion to a profligate maharajah, a petty tyrant capable of both tenderness and cruelty. These ideas crisscrossed. Merchant met the Maharajah of Jodhpur ("jolly, extremely wonderful"), who told him that there were some old cans of film, footage of his father in the days of his imperial glory, stashed away in his palace. It was *Eureka!* time—cans and cans of nitrate film, some rotting to powder. Merchant and Ivory transferred the nitrate film onto "safety" film. And Jhabvala incorporated the documentary footage into what I think (and she thinks) is her best screenplay. Every day on her father's birthday, an Indian princess, now living in Kensington, shows her father's old tutor home movies. The princess (Jaffrey) is, toward the tutor (Mason), fond, condescending, imperious. The home movies (supplied by the "jolly, extremely wonderful" Maharajah of Jodhpur) reveal the father of the princess to have been capable of both tenderness and cruelty, and the tutor reveals himself to have been, after his initial love for India, horrified, repulsed by the heat, the dust, the vultures, by human rapacity, by barbaric rituals that all began to run together in his mind. None of

this the princess understands. *Autobiography of a Princess* is as close as Merchant, Ivory, and Jhabvala have ever come to making a political statement about imperialism. The statement is implicit; it is the muddled humanity of the princess and the tutor that cracks the heart.

Often the ideas of the three friends cross-fertilize. Ivory's love for Indian art, which attracted him to India in the first place, became the subject of another superlative film, *Hullabaloo Over Georgie and Bonnie's Pictures*. Jhabvala's irony informs the plot; her own ambivalence is used to stunning effect. Rival collectors—a dotty Englishwoman and an erudite, avaricious young American—contend for the Moghul miniature paintings belonging to the maharajah (Georgie) and his sister (Bonnie). "India was never the place for them," the Englishwoman says; "the climate isn't right." Everybody tries to outfox everybody else. Georgie and Bonnie talk about the will of God, karma, destiny; and they manipulate everyone in sight. Bonnie (the names are perfect: this is the India where aristocratic Indians still use jazz slang and have names like Buffie and Binkie) carries on about Shiva while she taps Dunhill cigarettes with her scarlet talons. Everyone treats everyone else with beautifully good manners; and nobody understands anybody else; how could they? And India, the main character in the film, wins in the end. India always defeats its conquerors; India keeps its treasures. All this is observed good naturedly. This is simply the way things are; they could be no other.

IF WE WERE to rely on conventional sources for money—or on one source," Merchant says, "we'd never have made more than one film. If major stars like Alan Bates and Maggie Smith didn't agree to work for us for a quarter of the salary they usually command, we'd be out of business. If we depended on the judgment of major studios—who have illiterates reporting on novels as potential screenplays—we'd be dead.... Take for example *Heat and Dust*: I saw a re-

port at a major studio called *Eat My Dust*—they couldn't even get the title right.

"We have a few friends now, and we get deposit money from many sources. Conventionally, a distributor makes a deal with you even before you have a script. We don't work like that. If we believe in a production, we plow ahead. Here is an example: No movie has ever been made of a Forster book. We wanted to do *A Room With a View*. King's College, Cambridge, owns all of Forster's work. Bernard Williams, provost of the college, is a devotee of film, and he loves especially *Shakespeare Wallah*. So he said, 'Of course, yes, only you can do it.' And now we have the option to film. Where will the rest of the money come from? It will come."

Who can doubt him? Soon they

will film *Heat and Dust*. Then *The Bostonians*. Merchant is working on a project of his own about Bombay courtesans. Tenacity, serendipity, loyalty, and the respect they have for good work have kept Merchant, Ivory, and Jhabvala going for twenty years. Jhabvala believes that what we choose to do, or what we are called to do, takes twenty years to come to maturity and fruition. She says: "One must just go on pretering at the end of each twenty-year struggle that there is plenty of time for the next one—or at least start on it as if there were." Their well-wishers—there are many—wish for them another twenty years and an even wider audience; they can expect from them the felicitous surprises that come of good faith and the taking of uncalculated risks.

HARPER'S/MARCH 1984

baby

by Joyce Carol Oates

Four walls, a low ceiling, and the baby grows.
A floor and shuttered windows. Warm stale air.
The baby grows: weeks and hours.
Clambering toward you, a plump waddled purse.

The baby grows enormous with the calendar.
Cherubic-fat, quivering thighs and buttocks,
a snort of laughter escapes you at the sight,
wet glistening lips, a carnivore smile, *Love me*.

Bare floorboards, a windowsill edged with grime.
Years have passed. *Love and feed*. The baby grows
mollusc-smug, enormous. Cannot be stopped.
Lurid flushed cheeks, jewels for eyes.
A Cupid-toad. And yours. Inside these walls,
below this ceiling. Yours.

Love and feed. Swollen sausages for fingers.
He grows filling the room, the space. You.
Fat knees cutely dimpled. Ears pink and delicate
as shells. O Love you are enormous, clambering
toward me, filling the room, the space.
The air glistens. There is no air.
The baby grows.

MAKE WAR NOT IT

Vietnam: the revised standard version.

by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

Why We Were in Vietnam, by Norman Podhoretz. Simon & Schuster. 23 pages. \$14.50.

FOR OUR West Side mini-Spenser, this is an uncommonly restrained work. Over the last decade Mr. Podhoretz's writing has suffered from a bad attack of "it-is-later-than-you-think." The prevailing note has been incipient hysteria, and often not so incipient. Like the prophet in old carons, he has been parading the streets with a placard announcing PREPARE TO MEET THY DOOM. Reading *Why We Were in Vietnam*, one concludes that some kindly friend

must have told him that the time had come to cool it. The author's struggle for self-control is not always concealed, but the latest tract is blessedly devoid of the homosexual conspiracies, the uppity blacks, the menacing women's libbers, and other demons that have recently haunted the dreams of the Podhoretz household. Armageddon is not quite around the corner.

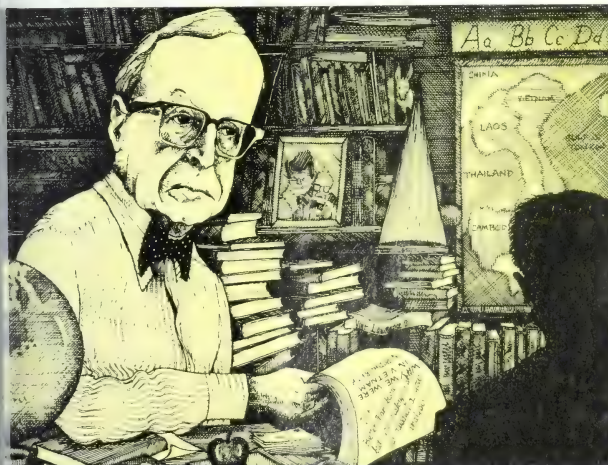
The point of the new book, I take it, is to persuade Americans to be proud of the republic's record in Vietnam. Mr. Podhoretz's style in argument is far from rigorous, but his thesis appears to fall into two parts. First, America entered the war out of an excess of idealism; second, Americans thereafter fought the war in a notably moderate and civilized way. The fate of Indochina under

communism, in the Podhoretz view, is the final justification of American motives. Our intervention, in short, was "an act of imprudent idealism whose moral soundness has been... overwhelmingly vindicated by the hideous consequences of our defeat."

I write as an opponent of the war in Indochina (belatedly, I now think in retrospect, but at least from 1965 on) and also as an occasional target of Podhoretz myself, so I must declare an interest. Nevertheless, I will not contest the first part of his thesis, having made it rather more precisely and comprehensively myself a dozen years ago.* If *Why We Were in Vietnam* were a serious book, Mr. Podhoretz would have disposed of the eminently disposable arguments made by the New Leftists, who labored so hard to portray the Vietnam adventure as part of an American attempt to establish world economic "hegemony," or simply as an expression of the innate depravity of American history and character. Alas, he deals with New Left arguments in a most cursory and superficial man-

* "The universalism that led us into Vietnam represented the extension—in the end, I think, the illegitimate extension—of two entirely honorable assumptions of American foreign policy over the last half century: the assumption that the United States has an obligation to create and defend a global structure of order; and the assumption that the United States has a democratizing mission to the world." This was in an essay written "to show why the Vietnam involvement proceeded with such apparent logic from the American past and why decent men should therefore have defended that involvement with such invincible self-righteousness." *The Crisis of Confidence* (1969).

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., is Albert Schweitzer Professor of the Humanities at the City University of New York. He is working on the fourth volume of *The Age of Roosevelt*.



ner, and omits some of them altogether, such as the theory—once in vogue and adequately refuted by subsequent economic developments—that we had to fight in Vietnam in order to stimulate the domestic economy.

NONETHELESS, the New Left remains the Podhoretz preoccupation. This represents a central analytical failure of the book. For the serious intellectual opposition to the war did not come from the New Left, in either its Marxist or its moralistic incarnations. It came from those who saw foreign policy in classical terms, as concerned with a country's national security. The most devastating criticism of the Vietnam folly was made by men like Walter Lippmann, Reinhold Niebuhr, Hans Morgenthau, George Kennan, George Ball, and J. William Fulbright, who believed in an old-fashioned way that the function of American foreign policy was to protect and advance the national interest of the United States. The question these realists kept asking was this: what was the mortal danger that a communist victory in Vietnam posed to the United States? Mr. Podhoretz never confronts this question squarely; and his implied answer—that we were under some obligation to “save South Vietnam from Communism”—is as moralistic and sentimental as the New Left blather he so righteously condemns.

He further undermines his case with the startling admission that in his considered view the war was almost certainly unwinnable. “In retrospect,” he writes, “it is hard to disagree with those . . . who believe that the United States would in all probability have lost in Vietnam with Diem just as surely as it lost with his successors. . . . It seems reasonable to conclude that the only way the United States could have avoided defeat in Vietnam was by staying out of the war altogether.”

What national interest of the United States justified large-scale military intervention in Vietnam in a war it could not win? In the Johnson years the prevailing idea was that

North Vietnam was the spearhead in a Chinese plot to take over south Asia—that, as Hubert Humphrey put it in 1967, “The threat to world peace is militant, aggressive Asian communism, with its headquarters in Peking. . . . The aggression of North Vietnam is but the most current and immediate action of militant Asian communism.” Mr. Podhoretz has no choice now, of course, but to acknowledge that this argument was nonsense.

Then there was the once famous domino theory, which he makes a feeble attempt to rehabilitate. His suggestion is that there would have been no communist meddling in Angola, Mozambique, South Yemen, and Afghanistan had it not been for the American defeat in Vietnam—as if such meddling were determined not by local opportunities and vulnerabilities but by events on the other side of the planet.

He goes on to contend that we had to fight in Indochina in the 1960s for the same reason that we fought in Korea in the 1950s. He cannot understand why some people who supported the Korean war opposed the Vietnam war. He can't understand this because he has little geopolitical sense of world affairs. Communism, to him, is an undifferentiated global threat, much the same today, it would appear, as it was thirty years ago.

But in 1950 communism was still, on the whole, a relatively coordinated world movement under relatively effective Soviet control. The extension of communism did mean the fairly automatic extension of Soviet power then. Mr. Podhoretz may not have noticed it, but things have changed. In an age of polycentrism, the extension of communism no longer means the automatic extension of Soviet power. If a country goes communist in the 1980s, it will succumb to a dismal tyranny, and we must mourn for its people. But the result is not necessarily a deadly strategic threat to the United States. The communist monolith has been irretrievably shattered. The only serious recent wars, outside the Middle East, have been wars between communist states—communist China invading communist Vietnam because communist

Vietnam invaded communist Cambodia. The dominoes have indeed fallen in south Asia, but they have fallen against each other.

Another old favorite that this book resurrects is the idea that we had to fight an unwinnable war in Vietnam or our friends in other countries would lose confidence in us. This is a really dumb argument. Few people in the world supposed that the United States had vital interests in Vietnam. Does Mr. Podhoretz really believe that if we abandon a futile effort as a part of the world where we have no vital interest, other powers will conclude that we will therefore offer no resistance in parts of the world where we do have vital interests? He once concluded that because Khrushchev pulled out of an untenable position in Cuba in 1962, the United States was free to work its will in Eastern Europe. Nor did France lose prestige when de Gaulle withdrew from an untenable position in Algeria; quite the contrary. Mr. Podhoretz is even more giddy than usual when he suggests that the United States wins more confidence abroad by persisting in a foolish and bankrupt course than by recovering sanity, cutting losses, and concentrating power and concern where it really matters to us.

Mr. Podhoretz's history is as muddled as his analysis. He is quite wrong about Kennedy, for example. Kennedy did not, as Mr. Podhoretz claims, equate the war in Vietnam with the war in Korea. The distinction between sending military advisers, which Kennedy did, and sending combat units, which he always refused to do, is hardly “metaphysical”; and it is somewhat illogical to denounce Kennedy on one page for acting “timidly” and on the next page for acting with “arrogant disregard of the difficulties.” Mr. Podhoretz's research in the Pentagon Papers might have led him to the plan for the phased withdrawal of American military personnel in Vietnam by the end of 1965—the plan that Kennedy instructed the Defense Department to formulate in June 1962, that became policy in May 1963, that led to the withdrawal of 1,000 advisers in December 1963.

Kennedy adding, "That means all the helicopter pilots too"), and that was canceled by Johnson on March 17, 1964. I might add, as a personal note, that Mr. Podhoretz is quite wrong when he says that "Schleinger never mentions" Kennedy's speech of June 1, 1956, before the American Friends of Vietnam. I mention, and quote from, the speech at the beginning of chapter 31 of *Robert Kennedy and His Times*. Nor, incidentally, was the draft extended in 1941, as Mr. Podhoretz says, by the tie-breaking vote of the Speaker of the House.

THE QUESTION remains: what was the American stake in Vietnam? And this question is basic to the second part of the Podhoretz thesis—that we fought the war in a moderate and civilized way. The key issue here, not mentioned by Mr. Podhoretz, is the problem, well known to theologians, of proportionality—the principle that means must have a due, prudent, and rational relationship to ends. The war in Indochina became, in my view, what can properly be called an immoral war when the means employed and the destruction wrought went out of any proportion to the interests involved and the ends desired. This is where Mr. Podhoretz's righteousness becomes as offensive as the righteousness of his enemies in the New Left. He feels that the purity of our motives sanctified the enormity of our acts. One recalls vividly the American pilot quoted by the *New York Times* on July 7, 1965: "I do not like to hit a village. You know you are hitting women and children. But you've got to decide at the cause is noble and that the work has to be done." Some dirty work, like beating the Germans and the Japanese in the Second World War, does indeed have to be done in the interests of national survival. The dirty work we did in Indochina was not required for national survival. If our motives in intervening in Indochina were lofty, they were also argu-ably mistaken. Mr. Podhoretz is deceiving himself if he thinks that righteousness is a defensible basis for

moral action. "Imprudent though it might have been to try to save South Vietnam from Communism," Mr. Podhoretz writes, "it was also an attempt born of noble ideals." But morality assumes prudence, not imprudence.

Nor does the aftermath confer retrospective morality on our free-fire zones, napalm, and defoliation. Who knows what might have happened had FDR lived long enough to prevent the return of the French to Indochina? Or if the peace talks between Hanoi and Saigon in 1963 had come to a successful conclusion? Or if Kennedy had lived long enough to carry out his plan for American withdrawal in 1965? History is inscrutable; and it is perilous to assume that the appalling conditions in Vietnam and Cambodia today would have ineluctably resulted without the prolonged and savagely destructive war we waged.

Why We Were in Vietnam asks Americans to be proud of American participation in a ghastly war in which we had no identifiable stake and which we could not expect to win—all because we entered the war "for the sake of an ideal." But nations, unlike individuals, cannot act on the basis of ideals; they must act on the basis of interests. "The Sermon on the Mount," Churchill once said, "is the last word in Christian ethics.... Still, it is not on those terms that ministers assume their responsibilities of guiding states." The reason, as Hamilton explained long ago, is that governments are not individuals, they are trustees. "Existing millions, and for the most part future generations, are concerned in the present measures of a government; while the consequences of the private action of an individual ordinarily terminate with himself, or are circumscribed with a narrow compass."

Mr. Podhoretz is not so different from his New Left bugaboos as he supposes. In their sentimental conception of foreign policy, in their conviction that the duty of a state in its international relations is to subordinate interests to ideals, they are really mirror images. □

HARPER'S/MARCH 1982

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JEWELLED MONSTERS

Coffee-table Surrealism.

by Joel Agee

IF I WERE to represent my understanding of the term "Surrealism" in a pictorial image—let's say a collage—I would place at the center a photograph of André Breton that is reproduced near the end of his luminous and mysterious *Nadja*: a beautiful face, splendidly handsome, but beyond that beautiful in a way that no single word touches with more precision than the decidedly *arrière-garde* "nobility." Above his head I would place a white Möbius strip covered with a single, endless, handwritten run-on sentence composed of exhortations like: "Write the imperishable in sand correct your parents forgo that which has a head on its shoulders don't drink water sing of the enormous pity of monsters don't read put order in its place give your hand to the others to keep..." and so forth. Hundreds of paintings, sculptures, drawings, movie stills—some of them famous, like Giorgio de Chirico's shadow-struck piazzas, others nearly unknown, like André Masson's pen-and-ink mindscapes or Victor Hugo's proto-surrealist

wind past the smooth, philosophical brow in a widening spiral and eventually dash against a huge projection of the night sky as it appears only in the desert, on mountaintops, or on the open sea (I'd need a planetarium for this) and spill themselves out there among the nebulae in brilliant and random constellations. Now that I think of it, images alone would be insufficient, since each and all of the senses were to be deranged, as Rimbaud ordained long before the term "surreal" was coined. At widely spaced intervals, therefore, an echo-

ing voice would resound from the depths of space: "Permanent revolution... No freedom for the enemies of freedom... Love... love..." and electronically monitored news flashes would roll past in bright neon bands, just to show that Surrealism remains an active force in life, if not in art: for example, the recent finding, by a *New York Times*/CBS News poll attempting to divine the public's opinion of the SALT treaties, that "77 percent of the respondents could not identify the two nations involved." For some reason, the logic of which escapes me, a preserve jar eight feet high, containing a live leopard, insists on being part of the picture.

This lovely commemorative tableau will obviously never be assembled, nor, I'm afraid, is my calling it "commemorative" likely to be challenged with a more vigorous sign of creative vitality than a standard protest letter from whatever remains of organized Surrealism. The most



Photograph by Man Ray.

imaginative portrait of the movement we are likely to have for a long time and surely the most ironic epitaph conceivable, is a sumptuous three-volume, \$255 extravaganza for the bourgeois coffee table, a facsimile reprint of an extraordinary magazine that appeared in thirteen issues between 1933 and 1939 under the unlikely auspices of the Surrealists themselves. At twenty-five francs an issue, the original *Minotaure* was no mass-market bargain either. It seems incongruous, even for a school of that made an aesthetic principle of incongruity, to dedicate itself on the one hand to the proposition that culture should be the province of a property of all, and on the other to the idea that its magazine should "be the most luxurious ever published."

We have reason to be grateful nonetheless—we, that is, who have the chance to examine these books at leisure, perhaps in a public library that hasn't been Reaganized too severely in recent months. An ability to read French would be useful, well, but the pictures alone give a quaint testimony to the spirit of adventure that animated the contributors, a complete list of whose names would represent a rostrum of some of the brightest figures in twentieth-century Europe. A brief verbal view can only hint at this glossy profusion of treasures: it has to be seen even touched, as well as read, to be properly enjoyed.

WITH this proviso, I will open the second volume to issue number dated June 10, 1934, subtitled "*Le côté nocturne de la nature*"—"the night side of nature."

Joel Agee is the author of *Twelve Years: An American Boyhood in East Germany*.

over the table of contents is a photograph by Man Ray of a starkly lit le torso (the head is hidden in kess) whose pectorals are lined h shadow in such a way that they ear like breasts, or else like eyes ging above the sunken abdomen, h gapes like a cavernous mouth. ning the page, I meet with a reduction, in color, of a Georges la Tour ("The Prisoner"), which ave never seen before, though I gnize at once the familiar motif a candle held in delicate suspension by the fingers of a young woman, of faces purified and simplified, just by soft light but by a quality of feeling—"charity" is the word once named it—which in our tury leads a degraded artistic half-in the kitsch of religious post-ls. Strange to come across it here, gside an essay that proclaims mission of modern art to be a "sturing" of "the skin of painting," arious "nocturnal" subjects follow: a study of owls, their manners habitats; photographs by Brassai mp-lit, deserted colonnades, gessing elm trees on a street at night, h plunging at candles; an essay Paolo Uccello, Peintre Lunaire" i silver-gray illustrations; an ogical study by the polymath er Caillois of a bizarre psychosis ed "legendary psychaesthesia" the mimicry of plant forms by ain insects; eight broodingly ic illustrations by Balthus for hering Heights; an essay in Eng-by Herbert Read, entitled "Why English Have No Taste," in h he argues that under capital-the individual grows a "shell of nality, a hard opaque exterior h admits no light; beneath which senses stir like blind maggots"; tailed account by André Breton he inexplicable correspondences een a marvelous (in the magical e of the word) adventure he had he night of May 29, 1934, and a n he had written "automatically" e twelve years earlier...

gather from friends and acquaint-s in the arts that hardly anyone ks of automatic writing anymore pt in the occultist sense of the l. Yet fifty years ago "automa-" was among the intellectual

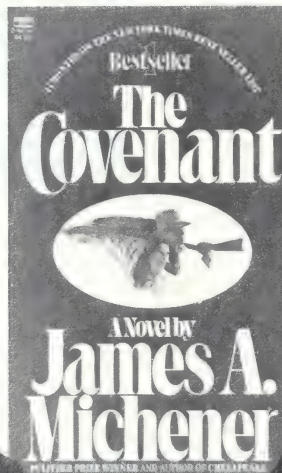
catchwords of the day, thanks to the tireless proselytizing of Breton, who had invented the method in 1919—or, rather, adopted it from the practice of certain mediums who offered up not only their brains as psychic telephones but their pencils as message-conductors. For Breton and his collaborator, Philippe Soupault, all that was needed was to dismiss the spirits from the scene and directly invite the subconscious to dictate its messages. The intoxication of discovery must have been like that of the first deep-sea divers. What strange jeweled monsters! What bizarre copulations of meaning and sound! And when the field of investigation moved to the visual arts, what colors! What light! The painter Oscar Dominguez discovered a method—a simple refinement of decal—by which *anyone* could produce the most fabulous landscapes and grottoes, with a pristine exactness of detail that would have been the despair of a da Vinci. Surrealist games were invented and propagated among the public with obviously subversive intent.

There are several impressive documentations in *Minotaure* of "pure psychic automatism" at work. My favorite is a series of charming poems and short stories by Gisèle Prasinos, a fourteen-year-old girl whose candid and uncomplicated face, photographed by Man Ray in the manner of school yearbook portraits, should persuade anyone of the truth of Breton's assurance to the reader that no one helped her and that her reading habits and general knowledge in no way differed from those of other children her age. "All poets must be jealous of her," Breton said. Here is how she writes (as nearly as I can reproduce it in English):

LOVE POEM

Veiled behind your shimmering cat's-eye cover, ah! why, tender inspired one, have you selected the lowly fibers of my heart? Have you never surprised the instinctive, itinerant blinking of my soul's central corporation? Do you really believe that faithful morality is a secret one suffers in particular?

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FAWCETT
CREST

Shall my healthy glances no longer perish under the arid influence of your dark pupils?

No, it is not so, it shall never be, for I keep watch in society over the unanimous capacity of the original organs and I know that in accepting the general superiority of the prophetic organization, your heart will never dare to take hold of mine.

Therefore, fixing upon you my reverences and surveillances, I smokescreeningly tell you these groaning words: "Let us fear the senses."

WHAT HAD begun in a spirit of play and naïve adventure became a science, a politics, a sacred mission. No more Art with a capital A, no more bourgeois entertainment, no more elites, no more imperial "civilizations," of the capitalist or the Stalinist variety. So-called primitive art took the place of honor normally accorded museums and churches: Eskimo sculpture, African masks (one entire issue of *Minotaure* is devoted to reports from an ethnographic expedition across Central Africa), American Indian myths . . . and, of course, always, the splendid archaisms that could be mined from ordinary European psyches. Someday, after the economic obstacles to human happiness had been removed, Surrealism would supply the tools for a total revolution of the spirit. In the meantime, by harnessing "psychic automatism" to a radical interpretation of Freud, Breton believed himself to have found a singular weapon against all constraints of reason, convention, and official morality.

Not surprisingly, the Marquis de Sade loomed large in the light of this dogma and was hailed by Breton and his associates as a prophet of human liberation. A discreet sprinkling of sophisticated respect paid to the human animal's interesting penchant for cruelty appears here and there in the pages of *Minotaure*—particularly through the pen of Maurice Heine, an authority on the aesthetics of crime—and it rather spoils these pages, to my mind. Bre-

ton had spoken early in his career of the "stupidity" to be found in the romantic movement and of the need to expunge it from the avowedly romantic surrealism he had founded, but his adulation of de Sade seems to bespeak a rather hefty dose of romantic stupidity, especially since Breton's best poetry represents an exaltation of love, not as bondage but as free choice and passionate fidelity—quite a far cry from the chains and giant dildos favored by "the divine Marquis." How ironic, too, that Breton and his brilliant friends were trying to frighten the bourgeoisie by calling themselves the embodiment of modern historical evil at the same time that the Nazis were preparing their own truly surreal demonstration of "the night side of nature."



"The Prisoner" by Georges de la Tour.

THE LAST issue of *Minotaure* is dated May 1939. The editorial speaks of a springtime "charged with menace" and pathetically pins its hope on the sun's return to the sign of Taurus, "the foam-flecked bull whose love of a woman must engender the Minotaur." (I wonder if the writer knew that Hitler had faith in the zodiac as well.) Five years later, a curious postscript was written in the journal of René Char, one of the great poets of our age and a member of the Surrealist movement from its beginnings. He was fighting the Nazis as a leader of the French under-

ground in the Basse-Alpes around Céreste, under the pseudonym Capitaine Alexandre. Fastened to the whitewashed wall of the room where he worked was a color print of de la Tour's "Prisoner," possibly—probably, I'd say—taken from *Minotaure*.

"It wrings the heart but how quenches thirst!" he wrote. "For twenty years, not one partisan who, coming through the door, hasn't burned his eyes at the proofs of this candle. He did not select Duchamp's metallic 'Nude Descending a Staircase' or one of the many Tanguys that resemble no other earthly landscape much as a bone-strewn desert; or one of Magritte's visual puns; or one of Max Ernst's nightmarish collages or Dali's horrific 'Premonition of Civil War.' Nor did he pin up Breton's famous dictum: 'Beauty will be CONVULSIVE or will not be at all.' How could he have? In the convulsion of total war, a different idea of beauty became imperative. It happened to be a very old one, but not for that reason inaccessible to Surrealist practice and understanding—on the contrary. Witness Surrealist Char addressing himself to the world in the crucible of war far removed from café debates, theater scandals, and rediscovering face to face with a seventeenth-century painting, the unity of art and life that had been the battle cry of all the manifestos, and something more than that:

The woman explains, the immured listens. The words that fall from this earthbound silhouette of a reangel are essential words, words that immediately bring help. In the dark of the dungeon, the tallow minutes of clarity draw out and dilute the features of the seated man. Scrawny as a dry nettle, there isn't a memory come to my mind to make him shiver. The bowl is a ruin. But the swollen robe suddenly fills the whole dungeon. The Word of the woman gives birth to the unhoped for better than any dawn whatever.

Gratefulness to Georges de la Tour who subdued the Hitlerian darkness with a dialogue of human beings.

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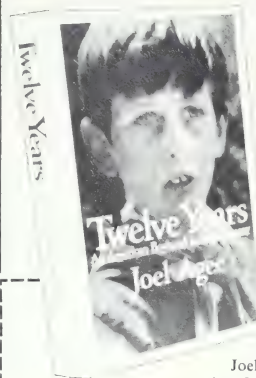
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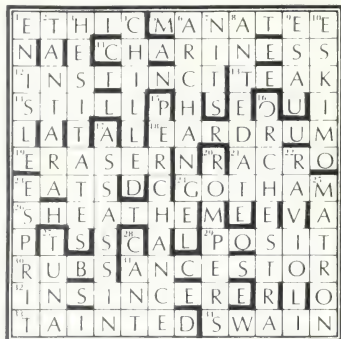
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Solution to the February Puzzle

Notes for "Printer's Devilry"

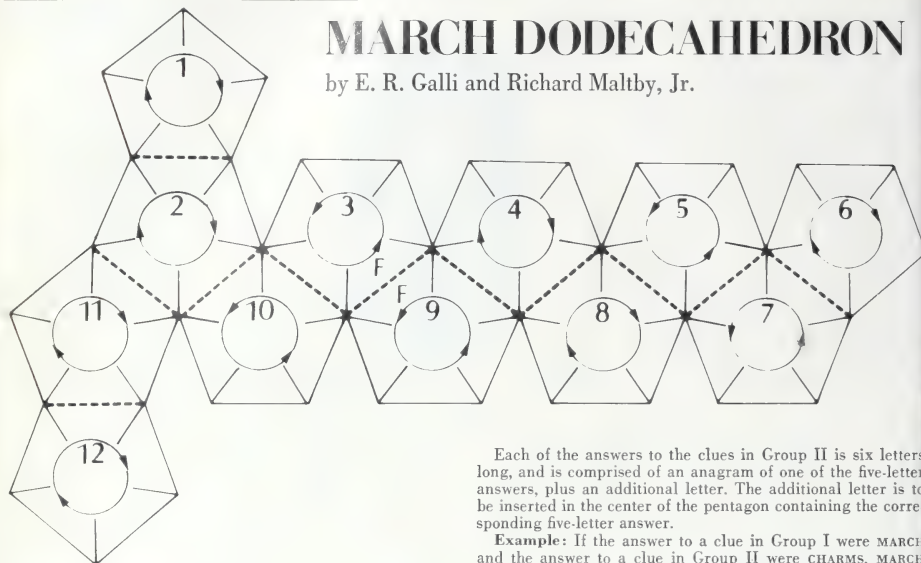
The slash (/) indicates where each clue breaks for insertion of the missing word. For instance, in 1A the missing word is ETHIC, to be inserted in ste/ed, when all adjustments are made, the deviled clue section reading "Hi! steed, up!" would become "his teETH ticed up!"

Across: 1. ethic, ste/ed; 5. manatee, old-wo/n; 11. chariness, c/ure; 12. instinct, s/ure; 13. teak, s/ipper; 14. still, r/uminate; 18. eardrum, tot/s; 19. eraser, cop/iously; 21. acro, i/t; 23. eats, Wh/o; 24. gotham, for/mer; 26. sheathe, Wa/r; 29. posit, m/ake; 30. rubs, che/wing; 31. ancestor, Rom/ero's; 32. insincere, p/agan; 33. tainted, cur/ious; 34. swain, Sha/w. Down: 1. enisle, Wh/at; 2. tantara, bla/b; 3. hesitates, s/tate; 4. chilled, ba/it; 6. archangel, c/anes; 7. nits, k/ettledrum; 8. antedate, w/et; 9. Esau, win/ce; 10. Es-kimo, th/rough; 15. perchance, pa/llor; 16. orchestra, p/ins; 17. assassin, m/ister; 20. rompers, F/iance; 22. ravioli, te/nor; 23. esprit, Ar/es; 25. matron, Bea/nie; 27. tuna, tu/g; 28. cant, renovati/on.

PUZZLE

MARCH DODECAHEDRON

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.



This month's instructions:

The diagram, if cut out and folded along the dotted lines, would form a regular twelve-sided solid with pentagonal sides.

Each clue answer from Group I, five letters in length, is to be entered sequentially in the five perimeter spaces in one of the pentagons, in the direction indicated by the arrows. The solver must determine which answer goes in which pentagon. The two spaces adjacent to each *edge* between two pentagons contain the same letter, as indicated by the letter F which is given to start you off.

CLUES

Group I: five-letter words

- A. Outspoken Lions group was curious
- B. Great poet is saint in bed? Quite the opposite!
- C. Deviate's undergarment
- D. Skim the balance
- E. Sporting groups with driving energy, first to last
- F. Animal that's said to decrease, to a point
- G. Public fund established shortly after church
- H. Fruity escorts?
- I. Kind of side order—for French, that is the start of supper
- J. Large, prime tree
- K. American composer's more confused about Mozart's Fifth
- L. Is venomous as the snakes

CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to March Dodecahedron, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by March 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive a one-year

Each of the answers to the clues in Group II is six letters long, and is comprised of an anagram of one of the five-letter answers, plus an additional letter. The additional letter is to be inserted in the center of the pentagon containing the corresponding five-letter answer.

Example: If the answer to a clue in Group I were MARCH and the answer to a clue in Group II were CHARMS, MARCH would be entered around the perimeter of one pentagon (and each of its letters also entered in the corresponding adjacent spaces) and the S from CHARMS would be entered in the middle of that pentagon. N. B. the clues in each group are randomly listed.

When the diagram is complete, the central letters from 1 to 12 will spell out four words (3,2,4,3) appropriate to the March theme.

There are two proper nouns among the answers to Group I. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The answer to last month's puzzle appears on page 79.

Group II: six-letter words

- M. Kind of pine about the lady... a hooker at times?
- N. Black personification of the U.S.—this is going overboard
- O. Jockey has bet and gets into hot water!
- P. The man's following, and the rest, makes an impression
- Q. Change the little kid refunded, turned back
- R. Shaker goes through incessant remorse
- S. Animals originated on the outskirts of Los Angeles
- T. Mom's joining Kennedy, outfitted for a sail
- U. *Deep Pink* heard being sung by a group
- V. Equality: heartless partiality
- W. Singing groups in *Company* retrogressed (ten departed from texts)
- X. Boxes left out of airline trips

subscription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the April issue. Winners' names will be printed in the May issue. Winner of the January puzzle, "Eight to the Bar," are Charles Bergoffen, New York, New York; Rebecca N. Bodek, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Besse Simpson, Lakewood, Ohio.

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Misfortune Tellers

It won't work. It'll ruin the environment. It'll throw people out of work. Free enterprise can't manage it. God didn't intend us to have it. It'll kill us all.

Down-in-the-mouth forecasts like these are sometimes heard in public debates on technological undertakings, no matter how worthy. Pessimists too often seem to outnumber and shout down pioneers.

Discouraged supporters of promising innovations can take heart from a delightful book recently published in England. *Facts and Fallacies*, by Chris Morgan and David Langford, collects a number of history's misguided predictions.

Many of the items concern transportation technology. That's a field in which we at United Technologies have a special interest as designers and builders of such products as jet engines, helicopters, rockets, and aircraft and automotive systems and equipment.

A sampling of the now-amusing statements of old shows that shortsighted naysaying is nothing new—even by people who should know better:

- "Rail travel at high speed is not possible because passengers, unable to breathe, would die of asphyxia."—*English clergyman Dr. Dionysius Lardner, mid-19th century.*

- "The dangers [of gasoline-powered vehicles] are obvious...Stores of gasoline in the hands of people interested primarily in profit would constitute a fire and explosive hazard of the first rank. Horseless carriages propelled by gasoline engines might attain speeds of 14 or even

20 miles per hour...The development of this new power may displace the use of horses, which would wreck our agriculture. The discovery with which we are dealing involves forces of a nature too dangerous to fit into any of our usual concepts."—*unnamed authority, Congressional Record, 1875.*

- "Flight by machines heavier than air is impractical and insignificant, if not utterly impossible."—*astronomer and mathematician Simon Newcomb, 1902.*

- "...ideas [of transatlantic airliners] are wholly visionary, and even if a machine could get across with one or two passengers, the expense would be prohibitive to any but the capitalist who could use his own yacht."—*astronomer William H. Pickering, 1910.*

- "...scientific investigation into the possibilities of jet propulsion has given no indication that this method can be a serious competitor to the propeller. We do not consider we should be justified in spending any time or money on it."—*Under Secretary of State, 1934.*

- "The acceleration which must result from the use of rockets...inevitably would damage the brain beyond repair."—*J.P. Lockhart-Mummery, author of a book on the future, 1936.*

- "Space travel is utter bilge."—*Dr. Richard Woolley, Britain's Astronomer Royal, 1956.*

Misfortune tellers with dark clouds in their crystal balls have always been with us. Happily, so have innovators with the vision and perseverance to reach successfully for the promise of technology.



**UNITED
TECHNOLOGIES**

Harper's

APRIL 1982

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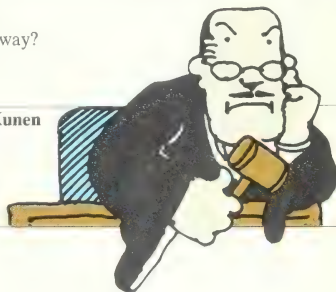
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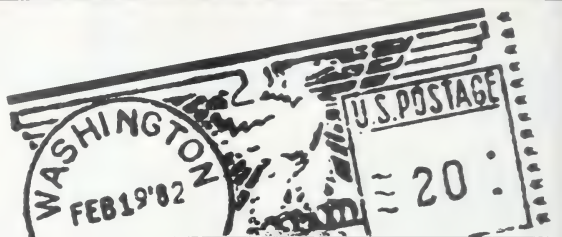
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR are very welcome, especially if they are short and typed double-spaced. We enjoy hearing from readers, even though volume precludes individual acknowledgment.

LETTERS



They freeze better

George Feifer can always be counted upon to say something negative about the Soviet Union. His most recent article, "Russian Winter" [*Harper's*, February], is no exception. In actual fact, winter in Leningrad, Moscow, or Kiev is easier to manage than, say, in Detroit.

Every season can have its charm, depending on how people manage it. Too many automobiles have turned a winter wonderland in the United States into a slushy nightmare. Getting to or from work on the so-called freeways in the U.S. is a jam session on slush. You feel you're in a battle zone, with the sliding and colliding of cars. On the other hand, one gets about comparatively easily on the quick and efficient subway and other public transportation in cities in the U.S.S.R.

Ironically, in our land of the free and the brave, thousands of people live in a state of confinement. They fear the perils of the street. With the advent of the automobile as a way of life, the role of public transportation or walking has diminished. The so-called freeways are salted or otherwise maintained, but other streets are well-nigh impossible to clear of snow and ice because they are cluttered with parked cars, and no one—municipality or property owner—now bothers to clear the sidewalks. When one walks in the U.S., if one dares, one must walk on the street (and get splashed by passing cars), and even then one must traverse a snowy or icy curb. Believe it or not, sidewalks in the major Russian cities are machine-brushed clean early each morning, making it possible for pedestrians to walk about without fear. Public transportation makes it possible to get about

without the hazards and hassle of driving.

And George Feifer complains, too, that in every public building in the U.S.S.R. one must remove hat and coat and check them in a cloakroom. I consider that a service, and good manners.

RALPH SLOVENKO
Detroit, Mich.

Reckless feckless

William J. Quirk was most successful in his efforts to be provocative when he wrote "The Feckless Thrifts." Mr. Quirk was, however, less successful in presenting any coherent rationale for his thesis that the savings and loan industry deserves to die.

He accuses the thrift industry of exploiting the naïveté of its customers and enjoying special protection from the government. Yet he neglects to note that the cost to the industry of that special protection has been narrow investment authority.

Mr. Quirk notes, astutely, as one would expect of a lawyer who writes on financial matters, that "the trouble is that the savings and loans have funded long-term fixed-interest liabilities (mortgages) with short-term liabilities (deposits) which could stay forever or could leave tomorrow. (The commercial banks, by contrast, mostly loan short.)" Maybe we have been mistaken in our ignorant operations over the years... we always thought mortgages were assets, Mr. Quirk.

It is no accident that the United States is the best-sheltered nation in the world. In the last paragraph of his diatribe, Mr. Quirk states that "there is no need for an institution specializing in housing finance." Although it is not yet clear, it is possible that congressional and administrative policy now reflect that

same view. If so, that attitude certainly marks a change in policy from the commitment to housing that has marked our national posture.

Mr. Quirk's final substantive suggestion is to permit the market to liquidate the savings and loans at the least possible cost. That "least possible cost" would probably be tremendous and would certainly include vast personal suffering. Mr. Quirk is ready, if not eager, to permit the demise of a system that has served America and her people well. He does not see the need for a specialized entity to play the role of the thrift industry. Mr. Quirk, who will house America?

THAD WOODARD
President
North Carolina Savings and
Loan League
Raleigh, N.C.

Harper's is too fine a magazine to print such a reckless attack on the savings and loan industry. Over the years we were regulated into a posture of taking short-term, low-yield deposits and making long-term, fixed-rate mortgages. Due to economic changes beyond our control, short-term rates have risen at such a pace that low-yield deposits no longer make sense to the public. We do not consider our customers stupid, as stated in Mr. Quirk's article. Our customers, like those of most other thrifts, are trading their deposits for higher-yield certificates at a rapid pace. There is, however, no provision for us to go back to all our borrowers and ask them to repay those low-yield, long-term mortgages that we still carry. We are working diligently to solve our own problems as an industry.

ROBERT J. ELLIS
Executive Vice President
First Southern Federal Savings
and Loan Association
Mobile, Ala.

Harper's smug conclusion that the thrift industry should be allowed to die because "there is no need for an institution that specializes in home finance" parrots a point of view long held by the biggest money-center banks and their allies in government and academia. But the name-calling article in which this conclusion is reached doesn't offer a shred of evidence to support the

conclusion. Millions of American families who today are unable to buy or sell their homes because of the squeeze on thrift institutions would say recent history has proved the opposite: long-term mortgage lenders are indispensable to our economy.

WILLIAM B. O'CONNELL
United States League of
Savings Associations
Chicago, Ill.

Having read with great interest Mr. William J. Quirk's article "The Feckless Thrifts," in your February issue, I am utterly and frankly amazed that your magazine, any respectable magazine, would actually print such a biased, inaccurate, and unfair piece of work. One might expect such treatment from the *National Enquirer* or the like. Readers of *Harper's*, and, indeed, the thrifts themselves, deserve better, however.

"If people were stupid," the article begins. An apt ending to that sentence would be: "they will believe Mr. Quirk's hypothesis regarding thrifts and the conclusion drawn therefrom." But America isn't buying Mr. Quirk and his garbage. America is the best-housed nation on earth because the thrift industry made it so. If, as Mr. Quirk suggests, the thrift industry "deserves to die," then the whole housing sector of our economy, the "American Dream," deserves to die.

WILLIAM B. BRADY
Arkansas Savings and Loan League
Little Rock, Ark.

I thought that I had seen some very poor and/or yellow-dog journalism, but William J. Quirk's "The Feckless Thrifts," in your February issue, has to win the all-time prize for purposeful, deceitful, and malicious writing.

E. O. KNOWLES
People's Savings Association
Toledo, Ohio

The article entitled "The Feckless Thrifts" appearing in your magazine is a very inflammatory article attacking an industry that has served the American public well over the past decades of its existence. In my opinion, this is Yellow Journalism in its worst form.

DICK HUMPHREY
Jefferson Federal Savings
Birmingham, Ala.

Sa'udi Arabia: Its people, its paradoxes, its power, as no outsider has seen them before

THE KINGDOM ARABIA AND THE HOUSE OF SAUD

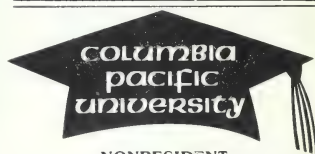
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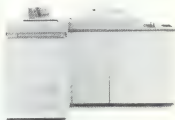


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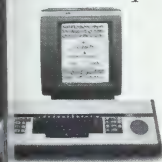
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PINSTripES & LUNCHPAIls

by Stan Luxenberg

Most Wall Street investment advisers now work for workers' pension funds—and they aren't earning their keep.

THE NEWS from the nation's mills and assembly lines has been grim: layoffs, bankruptcies, recession. But for a small group of jobholders, one economic statistic has been a constant source of reassurance. This is the growth of pension-fund assets. The lucky workers are investment advisers, people who make their living investing other people's money for them. Workers' pension funds far exceed personal fortunes as a source of such employment. As workers and employers have poured an increasing flow of money into pension funds, there has been a great demand for people who know, or claim to know, how to handle great piles of money.

The pension overseers have

avoided the hazards others face in a free economy. At a time when auto and steel employees suffer from their industries' past mistakes, the nimble managers of workers' pensions have made horrible miscalculations and emerged unscathed. While the performances of most investment executives have ranged from mediocre to pathetic, their salaries have climbed dramatically.

As Peter Drucker pointed out in *The Unseen Revolution*, pension funds have come to dominate the ownership of America's largest corporations. The funds account for much of the trading on the country's stock exchanges. Pensions have assets of \$670 billion, equal to about

Stan Luxenberg is writing a book on the franchising business.

half of the total market value of shares on the New York Stock Exchange. In effect, the workers own capitalism. But they don't exercise any real control. Awed by the vast sums, even the strongest unions have allowed Wall Street professionals to make the investment decisions.

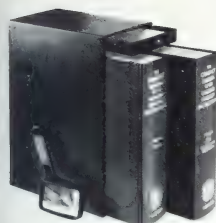
The people who manage pension funds are among the most impressive, and well paid, members of the business world. Their suits are as impeccable as their academic credentials. Starting salaries can reach over \$50,000 a year, and it is possible for a bright Ivy Leaguer in his late twenties to be earning \$100,000. Senior executives may make \$200,000 or more. They work in hushed offices with spectacular views of metropolitan skylines, when they are not jetting around the country and the world, staying in first-class hotels and waving credit cards at maitre d's in their search for profitable investments. Yet this whole pinstriped world is financed by the lunch pail brigade of blue-collar workers, living and working in a world their financial advisers never visit.

Several hundred management firms handle most of the large pension funds. These include well-known banks and insurance companies managing billions, such as Citibank, the Prudential Insurance Company, and Metropolitan Life Insurance. There are also smaller firms, ranging from operations that manage \$5 billion and employ fifty professionals to tiny one-man shops overseeing a few million dollars.

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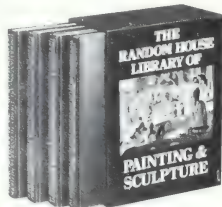
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IN RECENT years, union officials have begun to wake up to the ironies here. They complain that pension money has been invested in antiunion companies, notorious violators of work-safety rules, and businesses that have taken jobs overseas. Labor has begun suggesting that the money should be invested in ways that reflect the interests of the people who are supposed to own the assets. Pension-

of Morgan Guaranty Trust Company.

Ostensibly, then, pension-fund money continues to be invested solely to make money. But by Wall Street's own strict capitalist standards, the performance of the investment experts has been dismal. A. G. Becker Incorporated, a brokerage house that monitors the performance of 3,500 retirement funds, has consistently found that pension funds produce lower returns than other investors achieve. For the fifteen years ending in 1980, the equities in the funds Becker studied earned a median annual return of 5.5 percent. This is compared with an annual return of 6.8 percent for the Standard & Poor's index of 500 stocks, a common benchmark for investment performance. In other words, if the fund managers had arbitrarily placed all their money in a cross section of stocks, they would have done better than they did with careful selection using their expensive and complex analytical techniques. And the investment counselors' performance was boosted by the strong stock markets of 1980, when oil stocks—held heavily by institutions—soared. The annual return on pension funds for the fifteen years ending in 1978 was only 4.4 percent. In many years three-quarters of pension management firms studied failed to beat the Standard & Poor's index.

The blame for these results can be placed on a system of investment that encourages the pension managers to act like bureaucrats, not professional investors. While the professional investor seeks to maximize earnings, the bureaucrat is primarily concerned with securing a comfortable job. The bureaucrat sways with the winds of convention, ignoring his convictions. From the pension recipient's point of view, the funds should be managed to produce good long-term results. But manager-bureaucrats are only concerned with their own short-term paychecks.

In most pension programs, employers and workers make contributions to a fund, which is invested to earn additional income. The fund

provides money for pension checks. An officer from the company is usually charged with hiring professional money managers to oversee the pension investments. In the 1950s, pension funds were small, and corporations normally assigned a lower-level executive to watch over the money as merely one of his many duties. There was little effort to increase returns on the fund. In the last decade, as pension funds have grown and inflation has made all investments riskier, many companies have assigned full-time executives to oversee the money and hire outside managers. Often bearing the title of assistant treasurer, many of the new pension officers are aggressive young people who want to perform well in their job and move on up the corporate ladder. They feel under pressure to show their stuff in a year or two. The best way for the ambitious executive to attract notice is to improve results by shaking up the investment program and hiring new managers. The pension officer who decides that the best long-term policy is to leave well enough alone will not be viewed as sufficiently aggressive.

The money management firms compete for the attention of the corporate pension executive. To distinguish themselves from the hordes of competitors, the firms have begun to specialize, developing elaborate marketing programs. Some firms focus on energy stocks, while others claim expertise in selecting small, high-technology companies. Firms shift their specialties to take advantage of the latest fad. Corporate pension sponsors shop among the investment firms. If a firm fails to bring in dramatic improvements within a year or two after it is hired, it may be fired. Many companies have switched from manager to manager in a vain search for the hottest firms. In this respect, some very sophisticated corporations have behaved like novice investors.

A novice typically hears a tip or reads an article favorable to a particular company or industry. By the time he acts to purchase the stock, the good news will have spread and others will be buying, bidding up

HOMO ECONOMICUS

This is the first appearance of a new department, "Capitalism Observed." Whereas journalism about political life is, if anything, too much mired in grimy realism, journalism about economic life tends to be abstract and theoretical. Strongly held opinions of all sorts about American capitalism are based on little understanding of how it actually works in practice. "Capitalism Observed" will attempt to give the business world the same kind of informed, but bemused and detached, scrutiny that Harper's has traditionally given the world of politics and government.



fund investment, the AFL-CIO argues, should help create jobs and improve social welfare.

Professional investors scoff at such ideas, considering them naïve. The only purpose of a pension fund, the money managers contend, is to make certain that retirees will receive their checks on time. The money should be invested in a safe way that will produce the highest possible returns. If the financial experts are forced to take extraneous factors into consideration, they say, the task of protecting and increasing the funds becomes more difficult. "If you're trying to find a horse to win the Kentucky Derby, you wouldn't select one based on his stable manners," says Harrison Smith, then executive vice president

the price in the exchange's auction-style marketplaces. The amateur buys the stock at a relatively high price. At some point the price will inevitably decline, as excitement over the stock wanes or conditions change. The investor begins to panic as he sees his nest egg rapidly vanishing. Cursing his luck, he sells the stock to cut losses. In many cases, a year or five years later, the novice will curse even louder as the stock returns to its former high.

In a similar fashion, corporations choosing pension management firms have hired high and fired low. At any moment the fluctuations of the stock markets are bound to favor the approaches of some of the hundreds of investment firms. These firms become stars as word of their success spreads and corporations flock to hire them. Invariably the images of the winning firms become tarnished in a year or two, as their styles go out of vogue. Yesterday's heroes are then fired, since the stocks and bonds they chose failed to bring the expected returns. Corporations hire other firms that seem blessed with the magic touch.

IN THE 1950s, most funds avoided the stock markets. With memories of the Depression collapse still clear, pension managers invested in bonds or fixed-income securities that provided returns of about 2 percent a year. In the 1960s, the stock market began to climb steadily. By the end of the decade a fever swept Wall Street as investors came to believe that stock prices could only move upward. Many of the big banks, which dominated the pension field, were heavily invested in what was called the "Nifty Fifty"—stocks of big companies whose earnings had been growing rapidly, such as Coca-Cola, IBM, and Avon. The prices of the glamour stocks were bid up much higher than the earnings potential of the companies seemed to warrant. Some pension managers were able to boast that the value of their investments had risen 50 percent or more in a year. Then in 1973 and 1974, following the Mideast oil em-

bargo, the stock market collapsed. The Nifty Fifty were among the hardest hit. In the two bad years, the pension portfolios studied by Becker suffered a median decline of 39 percent, a decline worse than that of Standard & Poor's 500.

Corporations reacted by taking their reduced piles away from the big banks and firms that had bet heavily on glamour stocks. The hottest managers were suddenly those who billed themselves as market timers, smaller firms that had been lucky enough to predict that stocks were about to dive and to advise clients to move their money elsewhere. The market timers claimed that the question of which particular stocks were chosen was relatively unimportant. What did matter was heavy investment in a range of stocks when the market as a whole was about to go up. When the market was heading down, the market timers theorized, the money should be pulled out. The only crucial decision was whether to go in or out.

Unfortunately, in 1975 and 1976, when the stock markets began to recover and move upward, the market timers missed the boat. Pension funds that had fired big banks to go with market timers lost out again. National Investment Services of America, a Milwaukee firm, was one of the most successful market timers. The pension specialist successfully predicted that the stock market would dip somewhat in 1970. It urged clients to sell in order to avoid the debacle of 1974. From 1973 to 1976, according to *Institutional Investor*, a trade magazine, National Investment Services signed on nineteen major corporate accounts. In the following three years, after its approach had seemed to fail, the firm lost ten of them.

By the middle 1970s, clients were turning to managers whose specialty was low-priced stocks that paid relatively high dividends, including steel companies. The appeal of this strategy was short-lived. After that, smaller managers and stocks of small companies then became fashionable. In the late 1970s pension funds continued to move away from big banks, just as institutions like

Citibank, Bankers Trust, and Morgan Guaranty, which had been slow to adapt to new economic realities, were beginning to show more favorable results. By 1980, corporate pension executives became fascinated with firms that claimed to be experts in real estate. This came in response to real-estate prices, which had been skyrocketing for five years. Unfortunately, by the time pension funds began buying warehouses and office buildings, real-estate prices had begun to peak.

Shifting investment counselors, even when clearly warranted, can be an expensive process. Choosing from among the hundreds of managers can be an enormous task. A whole breed of consultants has emerged who merely advise pension funds on whether they should switch managers. Consulting fees can come to \$100,000 or more a year. When pension funds hire a manager, the new firm must often sell off portions of the assets in order to implement its strategy. If the previous manager emphasized computer stocks and the new manager focuses on drug issues, the new manager may want to replace much of the pension fund's assets. This involves paying brokerage fees for shares bought and sold. In addition, each time an institution unloads a large block of stock, the very act of selling tends to depress the price somewhat. It's possible for 10 percent of the value of the fund to vanish during the process of shifting management firms.

The use of consultants may also encourage constant shifting of investment policy. Having received hundreds of thousands of dollars in fees, consultants are understandably reluctant to advise that everything is fine and nothing should be done differently.

After all the money has been spent switching investment firms, there is little reason to believe that the new manager will produce more earnings. Several studies have demonstrated that it is impossible to predict a manager's future performance based on past experience. Becker's data indicate that some firms do generally produce returns that rank in the top quarter of all

investment managers. But over a ten-year period no firm was in the top quarter every year. Every manager, no matter how skilled, has off years when the market does not favor a particular style of investing. Once in a while even the least intelligent manager will be lucky.

Besides eroding the value of pension assets, the managers' tactics have damaged the nation's capital markets. In stock markets dominated by institutional investors, it is difficult for many worthy smaller companies to raise capital. When a particular industry attracts the attention of pension investors, they congregate their money in a few of the best-known or largest companies in the field. These blue-chip favorites tend to be staid, mature companies that offer little risk—but also little opportunity for rapid earnings increases. More obscure businesses, not favored by the Wall Street consensus, find it hard to attract the capital they need for growth, even though they may be in profitable sectors of the economy where new jobs will be readily created. Channeling money to old-line businesses has the effect of deadening the overall economy, stifling the rise of creative new companies.

The waves produced by periodic shifts of institutional money have swamped many small investors, making them cynical about stock ownership. Seeing that he and his friends are losing money on the stock market, the investor assumes that the "big guys," with their computerized operations and insider information, must be making a killing at the expense of everyone else. At a time when the country may face a serious capital shortage, private investors have pulled out of the stock markets, concluding that ownership of IBM is riskier than buying stamps or antique cars.

THE POOR performance of the conventional pension investment system is clear. A more stable program that avoided rapid shifts and trendy approaches would undoubtedly produce better long-term results. A few

corporate pension sponsors have begun to recognize the futility of hiring "hot" Wall Street managers. In the last several years, major corporations such as Exxon, Westinghouse, and Union Carbide have begun investing pension money themselves. Believing they can eliminate the costly management fees and produce the same results, they have been beefing up their in-house staffs. Many have substantially outpaced the investment firms. Because they are less concerned about being fired for one bad year, the in-house staff can be more flexible and in less of a hurry to switch investments.

In another reaction to poor performance figures, many firms have begun to invest in stock portfolios that represent cross sections of the market. These so-called index funds consist of several hundred stocks that very closely match Standard & Poor's 500. The index funds are cheap to operate. Investment counselors charge only about .03 percent of assets in the fund to manage the money, a fraction of the normal fee. The mechanical indexes have been able to outperform professional investors using the full range of geomantic tricks.

Labor leaders, many of them veterans of factory floors, have been intimidated by the intricacies of high finance and the sophisticated manners of the Wall Street managers. For genuine protection of workers' interests—and of the American economy, which those workers own—they must take a more active role. Unions could bargain for the right to participate in investment decisions. With a system of joint union-management control, pension managers would be required to seek long-term goals. Rather than pursuing one fad after another in a futile attempt to beat the average without taking any risk, pension managers might divide up the funds under their control. A portion of money could be put in index funds, guaranteed to produce an average market return at minimum cost. Other money could be invested aggressively in dynamic businesses that offer good long-range growth possibilities. Union representatives

on pension boards could also insist that their members' money be invested in ways that serve the workers' own interests in matters such as work-place safety.

Such criteria as these need not reduce returns. In 1972 Dreyfus Corporation, a prominent Wall Street firm that manages more than \$12 billion, established a mutual fund aimed at selecting stocks of socially responsible companies. Dreyfus, which is hardly in the charity business, started its Third Century Fund at a time when many university and other groups were considering taking into account nonfinancial reasons in their investment decisions. The Wall Street firm felt that the socially oriented fund would have a strong appeal to certain investors. In its first two years, the fund drew little attention. By the latter part of the decade, the fund had begun to win subscribers—though not because of its high purpose. The Third Century Fund proved an excellent investment. From January 1975 through September 1980 it grew 384 percent, compared with 140 percent for the Standard & Poor's 500.

A more radical possibility would be for workers to use their pension funds to buy control of their own companies. The General Motors pension fund, for example, recently had assets of more than \$13 billion, a figure about equal to the market value of the company's common stock. At present, less than one percent of General Motors's pension assets is invested in General Motors—wise enough from a pure investment point of view, but a situation not without its ironies. From a left-wing perspective, using pension assets to buy control of the company would bring reality to the notion that the workers own capitalism. From a right-wing perspective, such an arrangement would make the workers responsible for their own actions and demands—forcing them to face up to the dangers of wages that outpace productivity, for example. Under the current system, professional investment managers in effect protect corporate management from any obligation to its real employers, and protect workers

from the consequences of their own behavior.

If they wished, workers could use their control to prevent layoffs, plant closings, and other corporate practices they now object to but which managements defend as essential for protection of the stockholders' interests. However, the cost of such policies would be paid for from the

workers' own retirement funds. The interests of the shareholders and the interests of the workers would be the same. The result might well be sensible policies that would give management more flexibility, and workers more protection, than they have now. General Motors might even become a good investment again. □

LETTER FROM ABROAD



CHINA STINKS

by James Kenneson

It may be a nice place to visit,
but a billion people have to live there.

WHAT is the people's life really like in the People's Republic of China three decades after their revolution? At least for Zhengzhou, capital of Henan Province, on the vast, flat North China Plain, where my wife and I lived for nearly a year, sharing the lives of the university professors and students we worked with, the answer

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is: pretty grim. This is partly due to poverty, but it is largely the consequence of living under a totalitarian regime.

Zhengzhou, our city, is twelve train-hours and several mental decades from both Shanghai and Peking, where most foreigners spend their time. Because of its importance as a railroad junction, Zhengzhou was made the provincial capital after Liberation in 1949, and has since grown from 40,000 to 700,000 residents. As a result, nearly all of the

buildings are new—and nearly identical. A typical group of apartment buildings consists of eight or ten four-story brick rectangles arranged in two rows. Each building has four doorless entryways along the front, each entryway leading to a set of concrete stairs. At each landing there are two apartments. All decoration is considered decadent, and is therefore not attempted. The dirt courtyard in front of the building is a play and gossip area where an occasional street vender hawks his wares. The rear area is divided among the tenants and used for vegetable plots and makeshift chicken coops.

The whole complex, which might include the factory, hospital, or office where all the tenants work, is surrounded by a twelve-foot wall, which is often capped with barbed wire or broken glass. There is one entry gate per complex, or two at most. Some places had gatekeepers, others did not. No one could give an explanation for the building of all those walls when bricks were expensive and scarce, but everyone did agree that it made the streetscape rather dull.

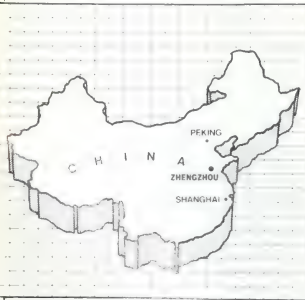
Inside the apartments, including those at the university, everything is concrete—floors, walls, ceilings. Often there is white or cream paint, but seldom any plaster and never any wallpaper. The rooms are small but the ceilings are high, around ten or eleven feet. Beautifying one's apartment was severely criticized during the Cultural Revolution (1966–76 as the Chinese date it), and most families are still taking no chances, so there is a great deal of barren wall space. Furnishings are sparse: no rugs or carpets, one straight chair, perhaps two, a few low wooden stools, a table, a bed, a desk lamp (one style available in the whole country), a bare bulb.

Happiness is having your own apartment. A family of four would feel privileged to have two rooms, one as living room, master bedroom, and study, one for the children. Some professors, factory managers, and bureaucrats are better off, but many lower-ranking professors are worse off—two families of four



sharing a three-room apartment, kitchen, and toilet, for example. Worse situations are quite common. All our professors had apartments with indoor plumbing, but in nearby Kaifeng, teachers had outside facilities and all water had to be hauled from the communal spigot. Since most people in Zhengzhou had this same arrangement, our professors felt lucky.

THE CHINESE day begins early. At 5:30 a trumpet plays the Red Army equivalent of reveille over every loudspeaker in the country. And there are many. On our campus and in most factories in the cities, the loudspeaker is the regulator of routine. At least one could be heard clearly from anywhere on campus, including our apartment. When the trumpet blares, people rise, dress, brush their teeth, and fortify themselves for morning exercises at six, preceded by a Red Army band rendition of "Ode to the Socialist Motherland," a march. Then the exercise music begins. Over an inane piece of band music, a drill instructor barks brisk commands. Some students stay in their rooms to study or sleep; exercise is not required except of freshmen, but there is strong social pressure to stay healthy. Many students and teachers do the



exercises in a comically desultory fashion, while others clearly enjoy them. The more athletic then go for a jog, the others return to their rooms to read a bit before breakfast at seven—for students, rice and hot water, nothing more.

It doesn't take long to eat a bowl of rice, so the students go to their classrooms for conversation and study. It was odd to walk into class at 7:55 and find everyone there, ready for class to begin. Classes last from 8:00 to 9:50; then it's time for another exercise break: same loudspeakers, music, and drill instructor. Class from 10:10 to 12:00, then lunch (rice with vegetables poured over it) and a nap till 2:00, with loudspeakers to wake you up for class at 2:30. (Students do not attend six hours of classes every day; the average load is about sixteen hours a week, including political study.) Free time arrives at 4:30, beginning with another exercise routine. Around 5:30, the loudspeakers provide music, announcements, news, and propaganda. Dinner is at six, rice and your choice of meat or vegetable sauce—but of course meat is more expensive. One day, the provincial education minister came to inspect the campus and the students rejoiced wildly even though they had to do a lot of preparatory clean-up duty, for that evening, with inspectors there, they had good food. Students take their rice bowls to a kitchen, get them filled, and then carry them back to a classroom or dorm room to eat. In winter, the food is cold by the time it reaches their rooms, so they pour hot water from large thermoses over it. Hot water comes only from the bathhouse boiler room; getting it means another wait in line.

After dinner, students study or go to the classroom equipped with a TV set for relaxation. There is one TV set per 6.8 urban families in China—and one for every fifty-three rural families, but most of our colleagues owned one because the university was given priority for television coupons a few years ago; in fact, the university itself had a whole room full of sets still in boxes and never used. No one knew why. Programming in Zhengzhou was from 6:30 P.M. to 10:30 P.M., and no one found it very entertaining. Usual fare included things like "A Tour of Shanghai General Petrochemical Works," "How to Make a Woman's Dress," "Raising Fish in

Hot Spring Water" (part of the series "Our Motherland's New Look"), and "Hygiene and Health." (We foreigners were particularly amused by the many commercials advertising heavy industrial equipment such as huge gears, conveyor belts, and cranes.) There were many Chinese and North Korean films everyone had already seen more than once. No one likes the films anyway because they are all, according to a unanimous chorus, too political and utterly predictable. The city and the university are asleep by ten; the few restaurants close at eight. On week-ends there is a 9:30 show at all theaters. People go to movies they don't like because there is literally nothing else to do.

FACTORY workers have six-day weeks with Sunday off. The university has Saturday afternoon free as well. Friday afternoon is regarded with almost universal dread. This is the time for political study. From one to four o'clock, roughly, the whole country—banks, offices, shops, schools, and factories—sits down to hear the latest official document explained and to participate in public criticism of group and individual shortcomings. There was so much of this at our university during the Cultural Revolution that it is now held to a minimum, only three hours, though other universities have six or eight per week. Many offices and factories have as much or more, so much more, in fact, that production is halved. An official directive recently limited political study to one sixth of the work week, or eight hours for most places, in order to increase productivity.

We never heard a good word said for political study except by party members (3 percent of the populace), and even they were not unanimous in their approval. It was just something one had to do. The students were tested in it and had to pass it in order to graduate, had to do well if they wished to stay in good odor, and they hated it. Nearly everyone is sick of politics. Conse-

quently, few give the subject any mental space at all. If Hannah Arendt is right in thinking the goal of the propagandist is to dull the mind to the perception of any truth whatsoever, then the Chinese government has achieved its goal.

Given this low state of movies, TV, literature, and political enthusiasm, boredom is a very real problem. Having an interest or hobby was taboo during the Cultural Revolution. Red Guards confiscated and burned stamp collections, birdcages, and non-Marxist books. The approved reading list was extremely tiny, so today's young teachers, to name the most important group affected, know very little about anything, to put it bluntly, and have no interests, possibly because they are afraid to. Their study of Marxism, of which they have done a great deal, has left only a couple of dozen slogans in their heads.

When Americans are bored, they tend to go out and buy something. There is very little to buy in Zhengzhou, even less in surrounding towns, almost nothing in the villages and communes where 85 percent of the population lives. Locally made clothing is very shoddy and years out of fashion even by Chinese standards. Quality control is poor; consumer protection is nonexistent. An issue of *China Daily*, the English-language version of the *People's Daily*, contained a list of ten popular mosquito-repellent coils that had such high arsenic contents they were unsafe for use; yet these brands continued to be sold.

THE foreign languages department at the university is a work unit, one of the basic organizational building blocks of Chinese society today. The electricians in a factory are another. The radiology department at a hospital would be another, while the administrative groups that oversee these activities would be separate units. Assignment to a work unit is for life. Getting a transfer is almost impossible, no matter what one's circumstances. Many people are "hired" by work units in places they

would like to live in but cannot get permission from their own work unit to take the new job. Some families are separated all their lives, father in one city, mother in another, working son in yet another. Even newly married couples cannot always swing job assignments in the same town.

The work unit makes many of the choices Americans make for themselves. It assigns apartments, sets salaries, collects union dues, teaches politics, distributes ration coupons for grain, cotton, cooking oil, and coal, determines who will get coupons to buy bicycles, TV sets, and sewing machines, supplies contraceptives for married couples, settles marital disputes (it must approve divorces), sets daily tasks and quotas, handles all incoming mail, discusses all complaints, makes promotions, organizes all exercise, sports, and entertainment, selects those who are to receive the rare treat of special training, recruits party members, and tells a couple exactly when they are allowed to have the one baby the state now permits. Unit functionaries also maintain a dossier on each member of the unit, a dossier that the worker is never allowed to see. This file contains all the self-criticisms one has been forced to write, records of all criticisms made about one in the weekly political sessions, work evaluation records, and any written criticisms anyone at all has ever cared to make secretly against one.

Teachers are particularly sensitive to this file because students can drop devastating critiques into it without any fear of a defense from the teacher, who doesn't even know what has happened. Teachers took a lot of punishment during the Cultural Revolution and are still wary of students. The presence of this secret file makes matters considerably worse, since the work unit certainly has no scruples about using the file against one.

The leaders and functionaries of each work unit are party members. In the foreign languages department, the party secretary, leader of the unit, knew no language except Chinese and had never been beyond

high school. Only one member of the entire administration of the university had ever attended college—two years, and that in Yanan, under Mao, where the main subjects were Marxism and guerrilla warfare. This is typical. Leaders of hospitals, factories, and bureaucratic divisions are appointed on the basis of service to the party, not expertise. The leader is responsible, fiscally and ideologically, to a vast hierarchy of officials towering over him all the way to Peking, each level further removed from the realities at the bottom, each level afraid to take problems to a higher level for fear of being criticized for not solving them themselves, yet also terrified of making a wrong decision. This structure is as unwieldy as a medieval assault tower, and results in a tremendous cost in efficiency and time.

For example, our department had no budget whatsoever and had no idea as to what budget constraints it was expected to work within. When the dean wanted a roll of tape or a box of paper clips, he had to go to a functionary and explain why he needed it. Functionary would fill out appropriate form and get approval from party secretary. Party secretary would submit form to administrative personnel in another building. Eventually, approval and money would arrive for purchase—if the request wasn't lost, forgotten, or refused, and if none of the decision makers was ill or on vacation. Inquiries about delay usually receive the reply "It's being discussed."

"It's being discussed" usually means "No" in China, for the Chinese are reluctant to say no directly in any situation. When a professor asks why he wasn't promoted when So-and-so, who taught half as much, was, he is told, "It will be discussed." He isn't there when the discussion is held (if it is held), and he isn't told exactly who was there or who said what. A problem of this type can be (purportedly) discussed for months. If the man with the original problem is too insistent, he will be made "to wear the tight shoe." Life becomes uncomfortable. And there is no one to turn to. The only access to higher levels is

through the work unit. If you don't get along with your leaders there, you'll wear the tight shoe all your life. You won't get a coupon to allow you to spend your savings on a TV, you won't get one of the new apartments for your family, you'll be criticized in weekly meetings at the drop of a hat and forced to write lengthy self-criticisms, and when you need an electrician to fix your wiring, you won't get one for a month.

"Backdoorism" is rife. By pulling strings—going through the back door—party officials are able to obtain scarce goods and favors. The *China Daily* reported several incidents from a grocery store in Fushan. When the store needs extra gasoline, it presents gifts of liquor and tobacco to the leaders of the gasoline-supply department. When pork is in low supply, the store has to give the municipal-buildings department leaders privileged treatment in order to keep the building maintained. Officials in the electric bureau claimed the store's meat slicer was defective when the store manager refused to give them liquor and cigarettes. When a worker broke his arm, the radiologist at the hospital said his X rays would be ready in twenty minutes if the store would just give him four legs of pork; otherwise, it would take four hours.

Some abuses are not exactly corrupt, simply institutionalized unfairness. Our university had some twenty cars and forty drivers. Administrative types could call for a car whenever they needed one, while teachers and students couldn't use one even in a dire emergency. A student paper praised a friend for locating a wooden cart and hauling another friend to the hospital thirty blocks away for an immediate appendectomy; using a car from the university was so far beyond the realm of imagination that no one even dreamed of asking.

THE MOST disastrous result of widespread "backdoorism" is the attitude toward work it has created. Most of us suppose the Chinese are very hard-working, and indeed, in this

country and Hong Kong, they are. But this is not true in the People's Republic. In fact, getting a soft job and doing as little as possible are the universal ambitions. Working hard was criticized as bourgeois during the Cultural Revolution, and though it is officially encouraged today, it is considered an imposition. When people see party members and bureaucrats doing next to nothing while living in the best apartments, eating the best food, getting the best cloth and taking it to the best tailors (even we learned to tell a "leader" four blocks away), and sending their kids to the best schools, they tend to get upset. Unable to express dissatisfaction, they simply do less work. We were told many times that there was a kind of nationwide unorganized slowdown strike constantly in progress. (Needless to say, the so-called unions do nothing but collect dues from members and provide jobs for the union bureaucrats.)

Our students dreaded the idea of becoming high school teachers because of the work load; we were astonished to learn that the load was only twelve to eighteen hours a week. University teachers taught only two to eight hours, with four about average and eight considered quite excessive. I had a weekly class of young teachers who complained that I was asking them to read too much; I questioned each one individually about how much time he or she spent on the job. The highest figure came from a girl who lived off campus and had to ride her bike to and from classes; counting this commuting time, all preparation time, teaching and paper-grading time, meetings, and political study, her work week came to twenty-four hours. The average was about eighteen. When confronted with these figures, the students reluctantly conceded they probably could read sixty pages a week for me, and they did, surprising themselves in the process.

The state's responsibility to provide jobs for city people leads to a great amount of underemployment. One girl, assigned to the foreign languages department by the state, had the job of getting the *People's*

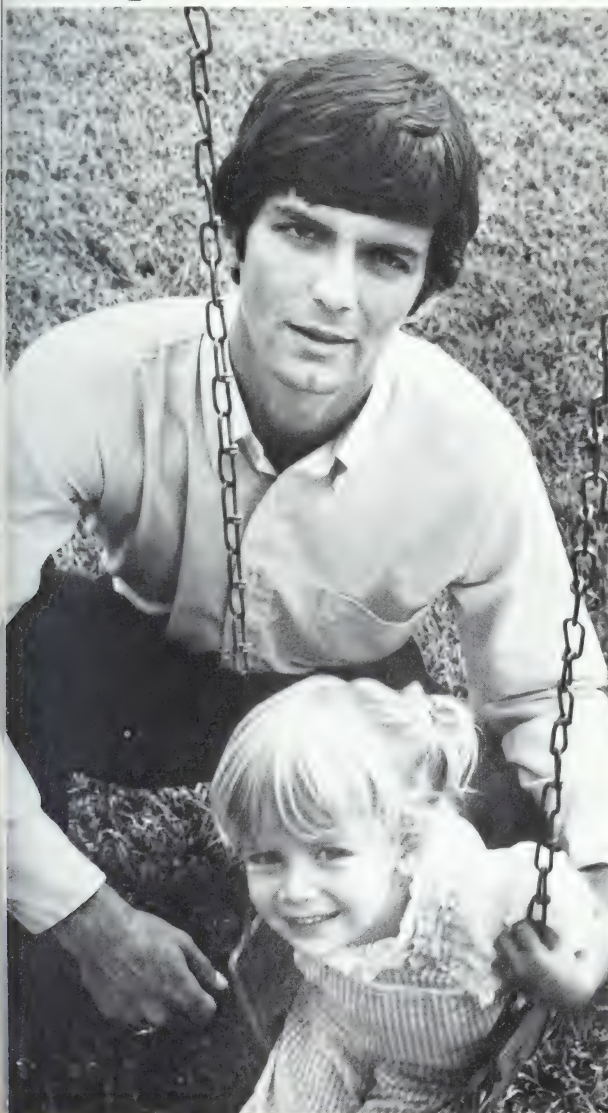
Daily from the administration building two hundred yards away, writing subscribers' names on the copies, and putting them in a drawer—all of which might have taken two hours a week; yet she was paid nearly as much as a factory worker or professor.

The overwhelming worry in students' lives is their future job assignment. They might be allowed to do graduate work, teach in the university—perhaps in another department such as history or physics—or they might become high school teachers, business interpreters, or translators. The students are never consulted about their interests or desires. The theory is that one should serve the state in whatever capacity the state wishes. This means giving the cushiest jobs to party members and their friends, those who have served the party, even though, in a university, "service" means little more than kowtowing to leaders and informing on one's fellows.

For society as a whole, the result is bus drivers who wish they were postal clerks, electricians who wish they were metal workers, loom operators who wish they were on a construction gang, and shop clerks who wish they were bus drivers—and so treat customers nastily. Since the students know that their interests and abilities are irrelevant to those who make job assignments, they keep their inclinations a secret even from their best friends. They fear that word might reach "the leaders" somehow, ruining their small hope of getting a congenial posting by sheer luck. And their chances would have been ruined, too, for just *having* an inclination is dangerous. Thus the innocent question, "What do you want to do?" is, in China, a loaded gun pressed against the temple; the wary foreigner doesn't ask it in groups or of students who don't trust him. With great sighs and usually in a whisper, students would tell us their hopes and dreams, obviously relieved to tell *someone*.

There's a new slogan in China now: "Be Red and Expert." If some way can be found to implement this slogan by recruiting the brightest and most decent people into the bu-

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Coordinator for a major chemical
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reaucracy, there's hope for China's future. But in the current cynical climate, this seems unlikely. People snigger when they hear the phrase "Serve the people."

YOU WILL have guessed that we did not like it in China, and you are right. I may have missed some good things, but I didn't just make up or misperceive the bad things I saw and heard. At this time in their history, the Chinese are simply not treating each other well, and anyone living perceptively among them will soon discover this fact. Without trust—between governors and governed, buyers and sellers, friend and friend—happiness can only be found in moments of dreamy forgetfulness grounded in nothing, and when the entire superstructure of a society treats individuals as "masses" without individual value, the individual, no matter how tough, begins to feel he has no value, certainly none he can consider his own and not the property of the state. Finally, with so little personal freedom it is unutterably difficult for a person to discover what his potential might be, let alone fulfill it in the service of the state. It is the policies of control, in short, that make the control necessary, and by exercising it so encompassingly, the government cheats itself of the abilities of its own people while it cheats people out of their abilities.

We went to China half wanting to find a place to live till we died. We went with hoping minds, not just open ones, and we found a people desperately crippled by their environment. Those who were most decent were most trampled upon, those most honest, most tricked. Imagination was suffocated, intelligence encumbered with slogans. Bare survival, mental far more than physical, filled the horizon. In many ways, we were ourselves crippled in turn. Whatever we had of faith in human nature or of hope for a humane future is far, far dimmer now. Our lives have been ripped raggedly in half.

It might be argued that I have

not taken sufficient account of China's being a poor country. Let me say that we went to China after more than two years in Egypt, a country more overpopulated and much poorer in natural resources and arable land than China, but whose poverty-blasted people are full of laughter, love, trust, hospitality, warmth, friendship, and hope. We spent two years in by far the most backward corner of Franco's Spain, Galicia, where beggars wrapped in newspapers slept on cathedral steps. My wife, Susan, lived for two years in Bolivia, the poorest country in South America, among Indians not even considered officially human until 1952, whose diet consisted almost entirely of boiled potatoes. We have seen poor countries. China is more than poor.

Tourists and people who go to China to study for short periods are certain to mention how polite the Chinese are. They don't realize that rudeness to a foreigner would be an offense serious enough to cost the perpetrator his job—which, since it involves dealing with foreigners, is a privileged and enviable position. People who see and talk to foreigners are chosen with great care. The casual visitor probably does not perceive that the Chinese treat each other with a sullen discourtesy difficult to comprehend. Shop clerks are legendary.

One serious drawback to the anti-Confucian campaign is that old people get little respect. On buses, a young person might give up his seat to us foreigners or even—I saw this once—to a woman carrying a baby, but never to an old man. Old people often get shoved aside in the mad scrambles that occur at bus stops; they wait patiently for the next bus, their heads down. Old folks are called, in fact, the "waiting-for-death group," a black-humorous play on the phrase for unemployed youth, the "waiting-for-jobs group." Lack of common courtesy has affected productivity, too, causing fights in factories. The government now has a politeness campaign in full swing, but it isn't catching on among young people, who happily threw out all the polite forms of

address during the Cultural Revolution. Politeness was "decadent" then; now it's just old-fashioned.

You have to shop in Chinese shops, ride the buses, and speak a little Chinese before you realize how much rudeness a person puts up with every day. Most visitors don't see or hear any of this. Diplomats, especially those who speak the language, might see more, but they are required to live in foreigners-only compounds, are stationed in Shanghai and Peking, and are restricted in their contact with average Chinese. Besides, it is their job to be diplomatic. Journalists are based in one of the three major cities, where, as I have hinted, life is very different: the "average" person in Shanghai is not at all an average Chinese. On their trips to other areas, journalists are only a bit better off than tourists. Of course they are more perceptive, but they are also watched more closely. And all observers know that if they are too critical, they will not be permitted to return.

We have no wish to return. Yes, we miss our friends, and it is sickening to know positively that they will never again tell us, as they used to, how they feel, what they are thinking, and what is happening to them. They were warned by their leaders not to become too close to us. Those who did are suffering for it now and will continue to suffer for it. They are courageous people and we can only hope that through some bureaucratic quirk one of them will be allowed someday to come to America for advanced study or an interpreter's post. The chances are slim.

I have depicted the average Chinese as beset with overwhelming obstacles and frustrations at almost every point along the jagged line of his existence, and it will be thought that I have exaggerated. I am willing to concede that life in certain other parts of the country is, at least physically, somewhat better than in Zhengzhou. At the same time, I know that in those vast areas of the country totally closed to visitors, conditions are even worse. Henan Province, I would guess, is below average, Zhengzhou about average. Life on the North China Plain could

never have been, never could be, free and easy. But the amount of effort being made by a gigantic, gluttonous, and self-serving bureaucracy to alleviate the suffering there is appallingly minute, and the mental suffering it causes far outweighs any physical suffering it softens. No, people are not happy and have little hope of being happy.

Far from exaggerating, I have omitted much pain. I haven't told a hundred stories because their tellers could be traced by their circumstances and punished. I haven't spoken of the dull and lusterless eyes of the people in the streets, such a contrast to the eyes of Hong Kong; nor of people penned like cattle behind gates until the train arrives, so they must stampede like mad bulls with all their baggage several hundred yards to catch it before it leaves, all to sit on hard wooden benches while their leaders ride in "soft bed" compartments with cushions and tea, seats reserved; nor of the scrapes on children's knees unhealed from April till September, festering and sore; nor of the darker follies of medicine and education; nor of the bone-gaunt, nearly naked beggar picking, with an eager finger, at the pink along a watermelon rind he has rescued from the gutter. Far from being hyperbole, this account barely begins to describe the brutality of daily life in China.

And yet the Chinese, some of them at least, among the old guard, the middle-aged, and the young, still maintain a kind of faith, pure, simple, and touching. It comes from Marx, who believed in the inevitable progress of history toward something better and more just. The Chinese know they don't have it, know it is a long way off, but they believe, some of them, that it will come, if not to them, then to their children or to their children's children or, at last, to some faraway millennial and smiling child of the future.

I have no more faith in progress, but, as I wish the world well, I wish the Chinese well and hope against all evidence that their faith, the only strength they have to cling to, is one day justified. □

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CONFESSIONS OF A BLUE-CHIP BLACK

by Roger Wilkins

Part I

TECHNICOLOR PADDY

EARLY in the spring of 1932—six months after Earl's brother, Roy, left Kansas City to go to New York to join the national staff of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and eight months before Franklin Roosevelt was elected president for the first time—Earl and Helen Wilkins had the first and only child to be born of their union. I was born in a little segregated hospital in Kansas City called Phillis Wheatley. The first time my mother saw me, she cried. My head was too long and my color, she thought, was blue.

My parents never talked about slavery or my ancestors. Images of Africa were images of backwardness and savagery. Once, when I was a little boy, I said to my mother after a friend of my parents left her house: "Mr. Bledsoe is black, isn't he, mama."

"Oh," she exclaimed. "Never say anybody is black. That's a terrible thing to say."

Next time Mr. Bledsoe came to the house, I commented, "Mama, Mr. Bledsoe is navy blue."

When I was two years old and my father was in the tuberculosis sanitarium, he wrote me a letter, which I obviously couldn't read, but which tells a lot about how he planned to raise his Negro son.

Friday, March 22, 1934

Dear Roger—

Let me congratulate you upon having reached your second birthday. Your infancy is now past and it is now that you should begin to turn your thoughts upon those achievements which are expected of a brilliant young gentleman well on his way to manhood.

During the next year, you should learn the alphabet; you should learn certain French and English idioms which are a part of every cultivated person's vocabulary; you should gain complete control of those natural functions which, uncontrolled, are a source of worry and embarrassment to even the best of grandmothers; you should learn how to handle table silver so that you will be able to eat gracefully and conventionally; and you should learn the fundamental rules of social living—politeness, courtesy, consideration for others, and the rest.

This should not be difficult for you. You have the best and most patient of mothers in your sterling grandmother and your excellent mother. Great things are expected of you. Never, never forget that.

Love,
Your Father

We lived in a neat little stucco house on a hill in a small Negro section called Roundtop. I had no sense of being poor or of any anxiety about money. At our house, not only was there food and furniture and all the rest, there was even a baby grand piano that my mother would play sometimes. And there was a cleaning lady, Mrs. Turner, who came every week.

When it was time for me to go to school, the board of education provided us with a big yellow bus, which carried us past four or five perfectly fine schools down to the middle of the large Negro community, to a very old school called Crispus Attucks. I have no memories of those bus rides except for my resentment of the selfishness of the whites who wouldn't let us share those newer-looking schools near to home.

My father came home when I was four and died when I was almost nine. He exuded authority. He thought the women hadn't been sufficiently firm with me, so he instituted a spanking program with that same hard hairbrush that my grandmother had used so much to try to insure that I didn't have "nigger-looking" hair.

AFTER my father's death, the family moved to New York. Our apartment was in that legendary uptown area called Sugar Hill, where blacks who had it made were said to live the sweet life. I lived with my mother, my grandmother, and my mother's youngest sister, Zelma. My Uncle Roy and his wife, Minnie, a New York social

her sisters, and her mother. Nobody else had any children, so everybody concentrated on me.

Just outside our door were the Harlem streets, even if many claimed they lived "on the Hill" or in "Washington Heights." Cunning, toughness, and athletic ability were valued on the street, as was the necessary intellect to play the Dozens. The Dozens was a simple game. Each of two participants insulted the other's parent—usually the mother and usually in a sexual way suggesting that the speaker had personal and exquisite knowledge of her sexuality. Insults were traded before all of the assembled peers until one party was clearly bested—either because he had run out of things to say or had been so massively insulted that he burst into tears. In a matriarchal society, for prepubescent boys the Dozens was a very risky game of psychic chicken. It proceeded, usually in rhyme, often like this:

1. Saw Sally [the other's mother] last night.
2. Must've been when sweet Sue [I's mother] was feedin' me her tasty yams.
1. Yo' momma got yams up her asshole.
2. Yo' momma's pussy got yams and cup cakes. Fucked her ass and face all over the Great Lakes. (The audience responds to each escalation—oohooie... uuhhmp!—indicating each time that the psychic ante has just been raised a little bit higher.)
1. Fucked yo' momma on the ice
Baby came out shootin' dice.
(Many rhymes are in the oral literature and many contests rest simply on who has the greatest nerve and the best memory.)
2. Fucked yo' momma 'tween two trees
Baby came out with black rusty knees.
1. Now yo' daddy...
- (There are clear rules, and a dead parent is out of bounds.)
2. ... wait a minute, motherfucka, my daddy's dead, now watch yo' fuckin' self...
1. Oh, man, I'm sorry, I didn't know... man, I didn't mean nothin'...

Sometime early in 1943 my mother's work with the YMCA took her to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where she made a speech and met a forty-four-year-old bachelor doctor who looked like a white man. He had light skin, green eyes, and "good hair"—that is, hair that was as straight and as flat as white people's hair. He looked so like a white person that he could have passed for white. There was much talk about people who had passed. They were generally deemed to be bad people, for they were not simply selfish, but also cruel to those whom they left behind. On the other hand, people who could pass, but did not, were respected.

My mother remarried in October 1943, and soon I was once more on a train with my grandmother, heading toward Grand Rapids and my new home. This train also took me, at the age of twelve, beyond the last point in my life when I would feel totally at peace with my blackness.

WILKINS, ROGER WOOD, journalist; b. Kansas City, Mo., Mar 25, 1932; s. Earl Williams and Helen Natalie (Jackson) W.; A.B., U. Mich., 1953, LL.B., 1956; LL.D., Central Mich. U., 1974; m. Eve Estelle Tyler, June 16, 1956 (div. 1976); children—Amy T., David E.; m. 2nd, Mary Myers, April 4, 1977 (div. 1978); m. 3rd, Patricia King, February 21, 1981. Admitted to N.Y. bar; mem. firm Delson & Gordon, N.Y.C., 1956-62; spl. asst. adminstr. AID, Washington, 1962-64; dir. community relations service Dept. Commerce, 1964-66; asst. atty. gen. U.S., 1966-69; program dir., adviser to pre. Ford Found., 1969-72; mem. editorial page staff Washington Post, 1972-74; mem. editorial bd. N.Y. Times, 1974-77; columnist, N.Y. Times, 1977-79; asso. editor Washington Star, 1980-81; sr. fellow Joint Center Political Studies, 1981—. Bd. dirs: D.C. Family and Child Service, Arena Stage, N.Y.C. Cultural Council, NAACP Legal Def. and Ednl. Fund, Inc.; trustee Pub. Defender Service, Washington, Af-Am. Inst., Fund for Investigative Journalism; bd. visitors U. Mich. Law Sch. Cited by Pulitzer Com. for Watergate editorials, 1972; sr. fellow Marc Corp., N.Y.C., 1971. Mem. Council on Fgn. Relations, Am. Acad. Pub. Administrn., N.A.A.C.P., Urban League; mem. Pulitzer Com.

worker, lived on the same floor. My Aunt Marvel and her husband, Cecil, lived one floor down.

As life in New York settled into a routine, my life came to be dominated by four women: my mother,

This article is adapted from A Man's Life: An Autobiography by Roger Wilkins, to be published by Simon and Schuster in June.

MY NEW HOME was in the north end of Grand Rapids, a completely white neighborhood. This would be the place I would henceforth think of as home. And it would be the place where I would become more Midwesterner than Harlemiter, more American than black, and more complex than was comfortable or necessary for the middle-class conformity that my mother had in mind for me.

Grand Rapids was pretty single-family houses and green spaces. The houses looked like those in *Look* magazine or in *Life*. You could believe, and I did, that there was happiness inside. To me, back then, the people seemed to belong to the houses as the houses belonged to the land, and all of it had to do with being white. They moved and walked and talked as if the place, the country, and the houses were theirs, and I envied them.

I spent the first few weeks exploring Grand Rapids on a new bike my stepfather had bought for me. The people I passed would look back at me with intense and sometimes puzzled looks on their faces as I pedaled by. Nobody waved or even smiled. They just stopped what they were doing to stand and look. As soon as I saw them looking, I would look forward and keep on riding.

One day I rode for miles, down and up and down again. I was past Grand Rapids' squatty little downtown, and farther south until I began to see some Negro people. There were black men and women and some girls, but it was the boys I was looking for. Then I saw a group: four of them. They were about my age, and they were dark. Though their clothes were not as sharp as the boys' in the Harlem alley, they were old, and I took the look of poverty and the deep darkness of their faces to mean that they were like the hard boys of Harlem.

One of them spotted me riding toward them and pointed. "Hey, lookit that bigole skinny bike," he said. Then they all looked at my bike and at me. I couldn't see expressions on their faces; only the awkwardness and the coarseness of their clothes. Before any of the rest of them had a chance to say anything, I stood up on the pedals and wheeled the bike in a U-turn and headed back on up toward the north end of town. It took miles for the terror to finally subside.

Farther on toward home, there was a large athletic field. As I neared the field, I could see some Negro boys in shorts moving determinedly around a football. When I got to the top of the hill that overlooked the field, I stopped and stood, one foot on the ground and one leg hanging over the crossbar, staring down at them. All the boys were white and big and old—sixteen to eighteen. I had never seen a football workout before, and I was fascinated. I completely forgot everything about color, theirs or mine. Then one of them saw me. He pointed and said, "Look, there's the little coon watching us."

I wanted to be invisible. I was horrified. My heart



Helen Jackson Wilkins and son Roger, 1934.

pounded, and my arms and my legs shook, but I managed to get back on my bike and ride home.

The first white friend I made was named Jerry Schild. On the second day of our acquaintance, he took me to his house, above a store run by his parents. I met his three younger siblings, including a very little one toddling around in bare feet and a soiled diaper.

While Jerry changed the baby, I looked around the place. It was cheap, all chintz and linoleum. The two soft pieces of furniture, a couch and an overstuffed chair, had gaping holes and were hemorrhaging their fillings. And there were an awful lot of empty brown beer bottles sitting around, both in the kitchen and out on the back porch. While the place was not dirty, it made me very sad. Jerry and his family were poor in a way I had never seen people be poor before, in Kansas City or even in Harlem.

Jerry's father wasn't there that day and Jerry didn't mention him. But later in the week, when I went to call for Jerry, I saw him. I yelled for Jerry from downstairs in the back and his father came to the railing of the porch on the second floor. He was a skinny man in overalls with the bib hanging down crookedly because it was fastened only on the shoulder. His face was narrow and wrinkled and his eyes were set deep in dark hollows. He had a beer bottle in his hand and he looked down at me. "Jerry ain't here," he said. He turned away and went back inside.

One day our front doorbell rang and I could hear my mother's troubled exclamation, "Jerry! What's wrong?" Jerry was crying so hard he could hardly talk. "My father says I can't play with you anymore because you're not good enough for us."

CRESTON HIGH SCHOOL, which served all the children from the north end of Grand Rapids, was all white and middle-class. Nobody talked to me that first day, but I was noticed. When I left school at the end of the day I found my bike leaning up against the fence where I had left it, with a huge glob of slimy spit on my shaggy saddle cover. People passed by on their way home and looked at me and the spit. I felt a hollowness behind my eyes, but I didn't cry. I just got on the bike, stood up on the pedals, and rode it home without sitting down. And it went that way for about the first two weeks. After the third day, I got rid of the saddle cover because the plain leather was a lot easier to clean.

But the glacier began to thaw. One day in class, the freckle-faced kid with the crewcut sitting next to me was asking everybody for a pencil. And then he looked at me and said, "Maybe you can lend me one." Those were the best words I had heard since I first met Jerry. This kid had included me in the human race in front of everybody. His name was Jack Waltz.

And after a while when the spitters had subsided and I could ride home sitting down, I began to notice that little kids my size were playing pickup games in the end zones of the football field. It looked interesting, but I didn't know anybody and didn't know how they would respond to me. So I just rode on by for a couple of weeks, slowing down each day, trying to screw up my courage to go in.

But then one day, I saw Jack Waltz there. I stood around the edges of the group, watching. It seemed that they played forever without even noticing me, but finally somebody had to go home and the sides

were unbalanced. Somebody said, "Let's ask him."

As we lined up for our first huddle, I heard somebody on the other side say, "I hope he doesn't have a knife." One of the guys on my side asked me, "Can you run the ball?" I said yes, so they gave me the ball and I ran three quarters of the length of the field for a touchdown. And I made other touchdowns and other long runs before the game was over. When I thought about it later that night, I became certain that part of my success was due to the imaginary knife that was running interference for me. But no matter. By the end of the game, I had a group of friends. Boys named Andy and Don and Bill and Gene and Rich. We left the field together and some of them waved and yelled, "See ya tomorrow, Rog."

And Don De Young, a pleasant round-faced boy even lived quite near me. So, after parting from everybody else, he and I went on together down to the corner of Coit and Knapp. As we parted, he suggested that we meet to go to school together the next day. I had longed for that but I hadn't suggested it for fear of a rebuff for overstepping the limits of my race. I had already learned one of the great tenets of Negro survival in America: to live the reactive life. It was like the old Negro comedian who once said, "When the man asks how the weather is, I know nuff to look keener at his face 'fore even I look out the window." So, I waited for him to suggest it, and my patience was rewarded. I was overjoyed and grateful.

I didn't spend all my time in the north end. Soon after I moved to Grand Rapids, Pop introduced me to some patients he had with a son my age. The boy's name was Lloyd Brown, and his father was a bellman downtown at the Pantlind Hotel. Lloyd and I often rode bikes and played basketball in his backyard. After a while, my mother asked me why I never had Lloyd come out to visit me. It was a question I had dreaded, but she pressed on. "After all," she said, "you've had a lot of meals at his house and it's rude not to invite him back." I knew she was right and I also hated the whole idea of it.

With my friends in the north, race was never mentioned. Ever. I carried my race around with me like an open basket of rotten eggs. I knew I could drop one at any moment and it would explode with a stench over everything. This was in the days when the movies either had no blacks at all or featured rank stereotypes like Stepin Fetchit, and the popular magazines like *Life*, *Look*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Colliers* carried no stories about Negroes, had no ads depicting Negroes, and generally gave the impression that we did not exist in this society. I knew that my white friends, being well brought up, were just too polite to mention this disability that I had. And I was grateful to them, but terrified, just the same, that maybe someday one of them would have the bad taste to notice what I was

It seemed to me that my tenuous purchase in this



Roger Wilkins and his grandmother, Kansas City, 1933.

larger white world depended on the maintenance between me and my friends in the north end of our unspoken bargain to ignore my difference, my shame, and their embarrassment. If none of us had to deal with it, I thought, we could all handle it. My white friends behaved as if they perceived the bargain exactly as I did. It was a delicate equation, and I was terrified that Lloyd's presence in the North End would rip apart the balance.

I am so ashamed of that shame now that I cringe when I write it. But I understand that boy now as he could not understand himself then. I was an American boy, though I did not fully comprehend that either. I was fully shaped and formed by America, where white people had all the power in sight, and they owned everything in sight except our house. Their beauty was the real beauty; there wasn't any other beauty. A real human being had straight hair, a white face, and thin lips. Other people, who looked different, were lesser beings.

No wonder, then, that most black men desired the forbidden fruit of white loins. No wonder, too, that we thought that the most beautiful and worthy Negro people were those who looked most white. We blacks used to have a saying: "If you're white, you're all right. If you're brown, stick around. If you're black, stand back." I was brown.

It was not that we in my family were direct victims of racism. On the contrary, my stepfather clearly had a higher income than the parents of most students in my high school. Unlike those of most of my contemporaries, black and white, my parents had college degrees. Within Grand Rapids' tiny Negro community, they were among the elite. The others were the lawyer, the dentist, the undertaker, and the other doctor.

But that is what made race such exquisite agony. I did have a sense that it was unfair for poor Negroes to be relegated to bad jobs—if they had jobs at all—and to bad or miserable housing, but I didn't feel any great sense of identity with them. After all, the poor blacks in New York had also been the hard ones: the ones who tried to take my money, to beat me up, and to keep me perpetually intimidated. Besides, I had heard it intimated around my house that their behavior, sexual and otherwise, left a good deal to be desired.

So I thought that maybe they just weren't ready for this society, but that I was. And it was dreadfully unfair for white people to just look at my face and lips and hair and decide that I was inferior. By being a model student and leader, I thought I was demonstrating how well Negroes could perform if only the handicaps were removed and they were given a chance. But deep down I guess I was also trying to demonstrate that I was not like those other people; that I was different. My message was quite clear: I was *not nigger*. But the world didn't seem quite ready to make such fine distinctions, and it was precisely that fact—though at the time I could



Roy Wilkins and Earl Wilkins (Roger's father), around 1936.

scarcely even have admitted it to myself—that was the nub of the race issue for me.

I would sometimes lie on my back and stare up at passing clouds and wonder why God had played a dirty trick by making me a Negro. It all seemed so random. So unfair to me. To *me!* But in school I was gaining more friends, and the teachers respected me. It got so that I could go for days not thinking very much about being Negro, until something made the problem unavoidable.

One day in history class, for instance, the teacher asked each of us to stand and tell in turn where our families had originated. Many of the kids in the class were Dutch with names like Vander Jagt, De Young, and Ripstra. My pal Andy was Scots-Irish. When it came my turn, I stood up and burned with shame and when I could speak, I lied. And then I was even more ashamed because I exposed a deeper shame. "Some of my family was English," I said—Wilkins is an English name—"and the rest of it came from . . . Egypt." Egypt!

ONE SATURDAY evening after one of our sandlot games, I went over to Lloyd's. Hearing my stories, Lloyd said mildly that he'd like to come up and play some Saturday. I kept on talking, but all the time my mind was repeating: "Lloyd wants to play. He wants to come up to the North End on Saturday. Next Saturday. Next Saturday." I was trapped.

So, after the final story about the final lunge, when I couldn't put it off any longer, I said, "Sure. Why not?" But, later in the evening, after I had had some time to think, I got Lloyd alone. "Say, look," I said. "Those teams are kinda close, ya know. I mean, we don't switch around. From team to team. Or new guys, ya know?"

Lloyd nodded, but he was getting a funny look on his face . . . part unbelieving and part hurt. So I quickly interjected before he could say anything, "Naw, man. Naw. Not like you shouldn't come and play. Just that we gotta have some good reason for you to play on our team, you dig?"

"Yeah," Lloyd said, his face still puzzled, but no longer hurt.

"Hey, I know," I said. "I got it. We'll say you're my cousin. If you're my cousin, see, then you gotta play. Nobody can say you can't be on my team, because you're family, right?"

"Oh, right. Okay," Lloyd said, his face brightening. "Sure, we'll say we're cousins. Solid."

I felt relieved as well. I could have a Negro cousin. It wasn't voluntary. It wouldn't be as if I had gone out and made a Negro friend deliberately. A person couldn't help who his cousins were.

There began to be a cultural difference between me and other blacks my age too. Black street language had evolved since my Harlem days, and I had not kept pace. Customs, attitudes, and the other common social currencies of everyday black life had evolved away from me. I didn't know how to talk, to banter, to move my body. If I was tentative and responsive in the North End, where I lived, I was tense, stiff, and awkward when I was with my black contemporaries. One day I was standing outside the church trying, probably at my mother's urging, to make contact. Conversational sallies flew around me while I stood there stiff and mute, unable to participate. Because the language was so foreign to me, I understood little of what was being said, but I did know that the word used for a white was *paddy*. Then a boy named Nickerson, the one whom my mother particularly wanted me to be friends with, inclined his head slightly toward me and said, to whoops of laughter, "technicolor paddy." My feet felt rooted in stone, and my head was aflame. I never forgot that phrase.

I have rarely felt so alone as I did that day riding home from church. Already partly excluded by my white friends, I was now almost completely alienated from my own people as well. But I felt less uncomfortable and less vulnerable in the white part of town. It was familiar enough to enable me to ward off most unpleasantness.

And then there was the problem with girls. They were everywhere, the girls. They all had budding bosoms, they all smelled pink, they all brushed against the boys in the hall, they were all white, and, in 1947-49, they were all inaccessible.

There were some things you knew without ever knowing how you knew them. You knew that Mississippi was evil and dangerous, that New York was east, and the Pacific Ocean was west. And in the same way you knew that white women were the most desirable and dangerous objects in the world. Blacks were lynched in Mississippi and such places sometimes just for looking with the wrong expression at white women. Blacks of a very young age knew that white women of any quality went with the power and style that went with the governance of America—though, God knows, we had so much self-hate that when a white woman went with a Negro man, we promptly decided that she was trash, and we also

figured that if she would go with him she would go with any Negro.

Nevertheless, as my groin throbbed at fifteen and sixteen and seventeen, *they* were the only ones there. One of them would be in the hallway opening her locker next to mine. Her blue sweater sleeve would be pushed up to just below the elbow, and as she would reach high on a shelf to stash away a book, I would see the tender dark hair against the white skin of her forearm. And I would ache and want to touch that arm and follow that body hair to its source.

Some of my friends, of course, did touch some of those girls. My friends and I would talk about athletics and school and their loves. But they wouldn't say a word about the dances and the hayrides they went to.

I perceived they liked me and accepted me as long as I moved aside when life's currents took them to where I wasn't supposed to be. I fit into their ways when they talked about girls, even their personal girls. And, indeed, I fit into the girls' lives when they were talking about boys, most particularly their own personal boys. Because I was a boy, I had insight. But I was also Negro, and therefore a neuter. So a girl who was alive and sensuous night after night in my fantasies would come to me earnestly in the day and talk about Rich or Gene or Andy. She would ask what he thought about her, whether he liked to dance, whether, if she invited him to her house for a party, he would come. She would tell me her fears and her yearnings, never dreaming for an instant that I had yearnings too and that she was their object.

There may be few more powerful obsessions than a teenage boy's fixation on a love object. In my case it came down to a thin brunette named Marge McDowell. She was half a grade behind me, and she lived in a small house on a hill. I found excuses to drive by it all the time. I knew her schedule in school, so I could manage to be in most of the hallways she had to use going from class to class. We knew each other, and she had once confided a strong but fleeting yearning for my friend Rich Kippen. I thought about her constantly.

Finally, late one afternoon after school, I came upon her alone in a hallway. "Marge," I blurted, "can I ask you something?"

She stopped and smiled and said, "Sure, Roger, what?"

"Well, I was wondering," I said. "I mean. Well, would you go to the hayride next week with me."

Her jaw dropped and her eyes got huge. Then she uttered a little shriek and turned, hugging her books to her bosom the way girls do, and fled. I writhed with mortification in my bed that night and for many nights after.

In my senior year, I was elected president of the Creston High School student council. It was a breakthrough of sorts.

Part II

BLUE - CHIP BLACK

IN 1962, after graduating from the University of Michigan and Michigan Law School, marrying the beautiful daughter of a black lawyer from Cleveland, and practicing international law in New York for several years, I was offered a job as special assistant to the head of the Agency for International Development. The administrator, Fowler Hamilton, suggested that I meet a Negro member of his staff to discuss my qualms about living in Washington, which was still regarded as a southern town.

Bob Kitchen was a revelation. He was very black, about six feet tall, and almost forty years old. He had a round head, dark-tinged eyeballs, and was dressed with a practiced elegance. Brown, shaggy suit, off-yellow shirt, brown-and-green-patterned silk tie with matching handkerchief flopping casually from breast pocket, and highly polished brown shoes all reeked of money. Kitchen moved into the room with a cool assurance I had rarely seen in any Negro, particularly in the presence of white power.

Kitchen's style, especially his verbal gymnastics, seemed consciously or unconsciously designed to send a message to the white world: "This is not a nigger, but rather a serious, educated man." I had seen other educated Negroes use pretentiously big words and complicated sentence structures, but I had never seen it done by anybody as smart as Kitchen.

I was troubled by what I perceived—a Negro bent out of shape by the power and the callousness of the white world. I figured that the way to handle oneself was the way I did it—straight on, no frills. What I didn't understand was that my particular adaptation to white power was the most grotesque of all. I dressed in Ivy League suits, shirts, and ties. Simple, straight white talk had become my native tongue. I had begun to know how white people operated in the world and had begun to emulate them. I had no aspirations that would have seemed foreign to my white contemporaries. I had abdicated my birthright and had become an ersatz white man.

But, of course, what white people saw was a well-educated, well-bred, sensible Negro who, but for the unfortunate color of his skin, was very much like them. I was just the kind of person they wanted, because I was "ready"—ready to face white people without embarrassing "the race." I was just the kind of safe black person white people were beginning to look for.

I worked at AID for two years. Shortly before I left, for an even better job at the Justice Department (ultimately, assistant attorney general), I found myself in Nairobi, Kenya, with an inspection team. The last two evenings we were there, during the cocktail hour at our hotel, the most beautiful woman I had

ever seen sat and drank with friends at another table. She had rich brown skin, huge and luminous dark eyes, lush, thick, dark-brown hair, and a fine figure. I couldn't keep my eyes off her. She was a glory, one of nature's great treasures. We speculated on what she might be—an actress, a model, an heiress, a mulatto, an Indian, or a well-tanned white.

Later, when we boarded our Air India flight to Bombay, we found out. She was a tourist-class flight attendant. I was delighted. I stared at her as she moved about the cabin, all delicate grace. I was so awestruck, I could barely talk to her when she served me. At first she had just given me a warm and beautiful smile. Then—could I be seeing things?—she was flirting with me. Since there wasn't anything else to drink, I asked to buy some whiskey, neat. Then I found I didn't have any East African pounds left.

"Will you take dollars?" I asked.

"Dollars?" she asked. "Where did you get dollars?"

"In the United States," I answered.

"When were you there?" she asked.

"Two weeks ago," I replied.

"How long were you there?"

"Thirty-two years," I said.

Her eyes widened and she exclaimed, "Oh, you're an American. I had no idea."

I was stunned. She had taken a load off my head. This beautiful woman hadn't been talking and flirting with a Negro, a "nigger." She'd just been talking to a man, a man whom she had found attractive. I was thirty-two years old, and I had never thought of myself that way. I had internalized the prevailing white American definition of me as a Negro, something less than a whole man. This woman's unexpected exclamation had ripped a veil off my unconscious mind and had shown me how much America's pervasive racism had crippled me. Thanks to her, I would never be the same. I became a *man* in this world that night.

MUCH OF the new black thought settled inside me during the 1960s, but rested there alongside some lessons from white America that couldn't be purged. The sense of deprivation, the sense of exclusion, would not go away but lingered, like a ghost, from my adolescence. In the late Sixties, I had money, power, and prestige. I certainly didn't want to be white anymore—the movement had touched me deeply enough to get rid of that—but I had a keen sense that something was missing. Perhaps it was the ease and assurance that in so many white people seemed to

flow from the absolute knowledge that America was their country.

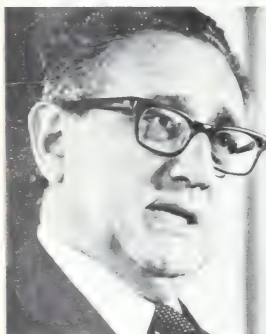
One tangible aspect of that deprivation was white women. By the time I was thirty-four, I had been with one or two white women, and I knew they weren't magical, but the taboo against interracial sex made it more tempting. Gnawing memories of adolescent deprivation and the powerful images of the white goddesses remained.

And so it was in the summer of 1966 during the riot in Chicago that I invited a tall, slender young white woman with long dark hair to my bed. She was a member of my staff and had long pretty legs that looked wonderful in a miniskirt. We were in Chicago at the same time, in the same hotel, by chance, not by design. Her name was Mary and she was a graduate of Smith College and we mainly talked that first night, but it was a beginning.

Mary meant a lot of things to me. There was wonderful sex, youthful, exuberant, and free. There was

her whiteness and the fact that at twenty-two she wasn't all that much older than the inaccessible girls from high school. And she came as close to being a hippie as a government employee could come, so she reminded me of wonderful images I had seen in Greenwich Village many years before—white girls with long flowing hair walking with black men—couples who I imagined had the ripest and most abandoned sex.

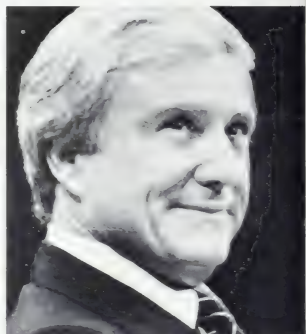
By the time Richard Nixon won the 1968 election, I was ready to leave the government. John Gardner, the former president of the Carnegie Foundation and one of Lyndon Johnson's secretaries of Health, Education and Welfare, thought that the Ford Foundation would be a good place for me to explore. He put me in touch with McGeorge Bundy, who by now was president of the foundation, and we talked. The conversation went easily and two jobs were offered. One was in international affairs and the other was to run the foundation's largest domestic program.



ROGER WILKINS



JULIAN BOND



ANDREW YOUNG

THEY ALL LOOK ALIKE

There are a lot of little truisms about racism that pass along through black culture. Some of them are so frivolous that they are funnier than they are painful, while others hurt both on the surface and much more deeply.

An example of the first is the saying "They all look alike." I remember once, for instance, ringing the doorbell of a lady's apartment at an hour when it was indiscreet for me to be there. As I was waiting for the door to open, somebody came out of the opposite apartment. I recognized him. It was Merv Griffin. He gave me a puzzled look and then said, "Andy?" in a quizzical voice. I knew it would be equally indiscreet for my buddy Andy Young to be at that place at that time, so just as

the door opened I said, "No, I'm Julian Bond," and then stepped inside.

Much more painful and destructive is the knowledge that many, perhaps most, white people believe that they see and think more clearly than black people, and that when there is a clash of opinion the white person must surely be correct. In 1970, when I was at the Ford Foundation, I wrote an article for the *Washington Post* about what it was like to be one of two blacks in a sea of white faces at the Gridiron Club dinner, an annual affair sponsored by Washington's journalism elite. As a courtesy, I showed it to my boss, Mac Bundy, who showed it to one of the Ford Foundation trustees. Bundy called me.

"Irwin Miller says that Julian Bond

was at that dinner. Your piece says that he wasn't. You'd better check that," Mac said.

"Julian wasn't there, Mac," I said. "I didn't see him and I checked the guest list. He wasn't there."

"Irwin says he was," Mac said.

"No, Mac, he wasn't there," I said.

"Well, here's Irwin," Mac said.

"You'd better talk to him."

"Julian Bond was at the dinner," Miller said.

"I don't think so," I said.

"I saw him," Miller said.

"Where was he sitting?" I asked.

"Well, he was sitting near me,"

Miller said, "next to somebody—I can't quite remember who it was."

"Was he sitting next to George McGovern?" I asked.

"Yes, that's who it was," Miller

The program gave money for programs in job training, inner-city education, drug rehabilitation, black economic development, and projects for other American minorities. It sounded just right, and the money sounded fine, so I agreed to take it.

The decision to go to Ford was typical of the pattern of my life; it was a mistake and probably an inevitable one. The Ford Foundation was another way station in the white establishment. At a time when the divisions between black and white and between black and black had never been greater, I chose to work once more with a white institution, a decision that was to do little for my peace of mind.

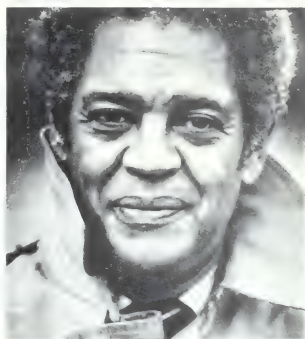
There were by now a variety of strong and well-developed strains of black ideology, each in its own way suggesting that blacks could survive in America only if they banded together outside, and largely in opposition to, mainstream white American life. Instead of turning away from Africa and slavery in shame as most of the older generations of blacks

had done, the younger generation was pulling it out in plain view and almost reveling in it.

The crippling imposition of the white fantasy upon the black psyche most enraged and infuriated me. I hadn't understood until the late Sixties. I had bought the fantasy of white superiority, the notions that my thick lips and kinky hair were somehow inferior to the genetic legacies of Europe. I had been ashamed of my skin, my genes, and myself. Those realizations and the rage that flowed from them impelled me toward a stronger feeling of kinship with other blacks than I had ever experienced before. And yet that closeness was more difficult to realize than ever before, because the new ideology carried with it a new hierarchy of color and social class. Once a white member of my staff asked me where I had lived as a youngster in New York and I replied, "In Harlem." A black staff member interjected, "Shit, he lived above 145th Street, that's Sugar Hill, not Harlem." When I was young, I had heard the older



MERV GRIFFIN



HENRY KISSINGER



DAVID FROST

said. "He was sitting next to George McGovern."

"Mr. Miller," I said, "that was me."

Another time, Marion Javits invited Jean and me to an evening for the Russian poet Yevtushenko and the American foreign-policy expert Henry Kissinger. By the time we got to the Javits' Park Avenue apartment, Yevtushenko was just leaving, and the party had dwindled to a small group sitting around the living room, focused on Henry Kissinger. Among the guests were Harrison Salisbury of the *Times* and his wife, Charlotte, Barbara Walters, Jasper Johns, and the English publisher George Weidenfeld. As usual, I was the only black in the room. Thanks largely to Charlotte Salisbury and myself, the evening soon got

quite tense and ended abruptly over the war in Vietnam and the recently leaked administration memo advocating a "tilt toward Pakistan" in its war with India. In the general shuffling toward the door, Kissinger and I came face to face. We smiled at each other and shook hands.

"Would you take the president a message for me?" I asked.

"Yes," Kissinger replied tentatively.

"Would you tell him that there are some of us who wish he would tilt toward busing."

Kissinger reddened and looked down toward his shoes. "Oh," he said and moved away. According to Barbara Walters, Kissinger remarked later in the cab, "That Julian Bond sure is a fiery guy, isn't he?"

Shortly thereafter, on my first day

at the *Post*, my old friend Liz Drew took me to Sans Souci, the lunch place, which had become one of the central power rituals in Washington. Liz and I were catching up on our own gossip when Kissinger entered, followed by his luncheon guest, David Frost. He spotted me as soon as he came in the door, and as he came toward me, his face lit up in a gracious and friendly grin. I stood and accepted his hand. "How are you, Mr. Wilkins. Welcome to Washington," he said.

Frost was behind him and couldn't hear what Kissinger was saying, able only to note the warmth of the greeting. As Kissinger moved on by me to greet Liz, Frost came forward. "Hello, Julian," he said to me. "It's nice to see you again." R. W. □

people in my neighborhood insist that they lived in Washington Heights, to distance themselves from the poorer people who had lived in the Harlem Valley. Now it was the style to claim that you had lived in Harlem to distance yourself from the richer people uptown.

My acculturation as an adolescent in a white middle-class neighborhood had deprived me of easy access to black street language or the sinuous body movements that would have made me comfortable working day by day in a storefront in San Francisco or Cleveland. My parents had armed me for life in an integrated America, and now the enraged and romantic part of me didn't want to go there; but I was not equipped culturally or psychically to spend my life in the deepest pools of black America. So I was going to the Ford Foundation instead of a ghetto storefront. I could do things there that people in the storefronts could not do nearly as well. But I couldn't find a spiritual peace that I desperately needed.

Radically chic

IN DECEMBER 1969, a delicate, dark-haired woman with fine features and a striking figure came to interview me for a book on Robert F. Kennedy. She identified herself as the former wife of William Vanden Heuvel, a familiar New York political aspirant and a fairly close associate of Rob-

ert Kennedy's. I had never heard of Mrs. Vanden Heuvel, but the breathy rush and jumble of her words on the telephone was appealing.

Mrs. Vanden Heuvel turned out to be even more appealing in person. She kept getting tangled up in the wires of her tape recorder as she tried to find the outlet behind the couch in my office. The tentativeness of her approach produced an impression of the woman's vulnerability that I was later to learn was something less than the whole story.

But it was partly true and enormously effective for an interviewer. To help this woman out, I found myself remembering things that I thought I had long forgotten. Each time I would come up with a new nugget of information to her half-formulated question, she would give me a smile suffused with shy gratitude. When the interview was over and she was stumbling over her mike and her cords, she thanked me profusely. Several days later, I received a warm and effusive note of thanks, expressing the hope that I would review the transcript. I was anxious to see that woman again, and so in January 1970, when the transcript had come back, I went over to her Central Park West apartment early one evening to go over the material and have a drink.

Jean and I had one drink and then another. And then I took her out to dinner that night, and later another. Her smile was bewitching. It would begin and her head would tuck down and sideways, then the smile would begin to fade as if a cloud of doubt



Assistant Attorney General Roger Wilkins, Justice Department aide Clifford Alexander, and Attorney General Ramsey

Clark at a news conference, April 1968, reporting on FBI efforts to find the assassin of Martin Luther King.

were passing, and then the teeth would show again and the smile would rush to fulfillment, powered by a shy giggle. Jean's bones were as thin as her features were fine. Her hair was very dark and her skin very pale. Her touch on hand or cheek was light, sometimes tentative, always affecting. She had a way of making a man feel strong, capable, protective, supported, and, ultimately, loved and loving.

It was clear from her large apartment overlooking Central Park that Jean was not poor. Her father was Dr. Julius Caesar Stein, usually called Jules, president of the Music Corporation of America and a dominant—some would say *the* dominant—force in the movie industry. Jean had grown up as a princess in the canyons above Los Angeles.

Jean started to introduce me to her impressive circle of friends. There was Gillian, who lived in the building next door. Gillian was Jean's best friend, and though her father had been curator of the National Gallery, Gillian was just Gillian from next door, easy to be with. And then there were Jason and Barbara Epstein, stars of the literary world, he at Random House and she at the *New York Review of Books*. My relationship with Jean often landed me at evenings at the Epsteins' with Stephen Spender or Lillian Hellman or, at the least, Bob Bernstein, the lovely man who heads Random House. One night, Jean said we'd been asked to drop by the home of another editor, Aaron Asher, of Holt, Rinehart and Winston. So we went, and in addition to the Ashers, here were the photographer Inge Morath and her husband, Arthur Miller, and there was also, sitting across from the Millers, Philip Roth.

I was gaining access to artistic and literary circles in New York, not only through Jean, but through my own activism as well. Late in 1969, I was asked to attend a meeting at the home of Lillian Hellman. When I got to the meeting, I recognized Burke Marshall, the head of the Civil Rights Division under Robert F. Kennedy, the writer William Styron and his wife, Rose, Norman Dorsen, a distinguished NYU law professor and civil libertarian, Blair Clark, a writer and former radio journalist, the cartoonist Jules Feiffer, and Robert Silvers, editor of the *New York Review of Books*. That night, Jean and I had dinner with Felicia and Leonard Bernstein at their entrance apartment on Park Avenue.

There was a strain in all of this. I had known when I left the government that I had to forge a new identity, or at least to consolidate the old one, which in large measure had been based on a charter from a president who was no longer in office and at a time that no longer existed. Now I was getting a new identity from associations with some of the most glittering people in America. But an identity built on association was about as valuable as fool's gold. It became absolutely destructive of the ego of one who doubted the value of what he had already accomplished and was on the way to hating what he was presently working on.



Roger Wilkins, age 33, introduces his six-year-old daughter, Amy, to President Johnson after his swearing-in as director of the Community Relations Service, February 1966. NAACP director Roy Wilkins at right.

Occasionally, my name would slip into a gossip column. "Roger Wilkins of the Ford Foundation," it would say. That was perfectly respectable in print, but the reality was becoming more and more difficult to live with. One day, for example, a black man and a white woman who had founded a private mini-school for poor black kids in the West Philadelphia ghetto, came to have lunch with me at Ford. Theirs was exactly the kind of effort that I loved: innovative, concerned, respectful, and loving without condescension. It was for me the purified essence of the black consciousness movement of the late Sixties.

We had lunch in the dining room on the eleventh floor of the elegant foundation headquarters. Over paté, they began to tell me how they had conceived the school program and why. While we ate our steak and lamb chops, they told me how they had built their curriculum, and over chocolate mousse they told me how they had scabbled for the funding that had kept them alive so far.

After lunch, I led them back to my office, with its elegant furniture and a glass wall that looked out onto the garden.

"We need \$25,000 to get us through this year," the man said.

I sighed. I had seen these people because a good friend of mine had asked me to see them as a favor.

"I'm afraid there's nothing I can do for you," I said, having known what they would ask.

Their faces sagged. I tried to explain. "My program only does education in conjunction with the people here at Ford who specialize in education," I began, attempting the impossible task of making institutional constraints plausible to working idealists. "My counterpart in education already has a number

of pilot projects like this. That leaves me powerless to help you."

They looked at me, their faces blank. I looked back at them, trying to keep my face blank.

"Won't you even come to Philadelphia to look at the school before you turn us down?" the white woman asked.

"There's no reason for me to come to Philadelphia except to make myself feel worse than I do now," I said.

I stood up and started moving them toward the elevator. There was no use prolonging this agony. We walked down the corridor on the polished floor and then waited for the elevator in silence.

"I'm really sorry," I finally said.

They just shrugged and looked downcast. When the elevator came, they thanked me and stepped in. As the door was closing, I heard the man say, "We could run our school for three years with just what it cost to build this elevator."

Yet the Ford Foundation was the only place where I had any daily connection with blackness—thinly strained and awkward as the connection often was. The places where I had drifted and where I was building an identity outside working hours were all white. I was spending many of my evenings on Central Park West or joining Jean's friends in the newest cultural trend or artistic fad. Jean's sensitivity,

warmth, and perceptive intelligence were enough to keep me involved in our relationship, but she had also given me the keys to the candy store. Instead of standing with my nose pressed to the window, I often found myself inside rooms with people whose names were Mailer, Vidal, Javits, Kennedy, or Bernstein.

Those who were Jean's friends seemed as devoid of racism as any group of whites I had ever encountered. Whatever problems people had about Jean and me they kept to themselves. Once, in Roxbury, Connecticut, at Arthur and Inge Miller's home, at a party celebrating Arthur's birthday, a grande dame of a Russian *émigrée* took me to be the bartender. Everybody thought it was pretty funny and I didn't mind. Once, arriving for a party at the apartment of Marion and Jacob Javits, we ran into Warren Beatty, who was just leaving, in the lobby. Beatty grinned and said, "God, what a swell-looking couple."

Normally, there was simply easy acceptance of me, as if I had earned my way into those drawing rooms just as everyone else had. Yet because my work was not individualistic, creative, or as celebrated as that of most of the people I saw around me, I didn't believe I belonged.

Felicia Bernstein, Leonard's delicate, intelligent, and beautiful wife, was one of my favorites in Jean's

"... A WELL-KNOWN NEUROSIS ..."

What is [a Jew's] relation to the rest of his society? In what sense is it, and in what sense is it not, "his" society? This problem became particularly acute after the French Revolution for those who were released from the ancient prison house and were moving into the light of day, out of the confinement of the ghettos—or what were so in fact if not in name—of the western world. The liberation had been relatively sudden: the problems of adjustment had not been prepared for.

Some recoiled before the prospect of a strange, wider world, and preferred to linger in the shadows of the narrow but familiar place of ancient confinement. Others, the most eager, the most ambitious and most idealistic and optimistic, went towards the light with passionate hopes. Some successfully assimilated with their new brothers, changed their faith, or, at any rate, their habits, with evidently no great agony or expense of spirit, like the Jewish banker Gideon in eighteenth-century England, whose name is all but forgotten today; like the economist David Ricardo or those

eminent financiers and railway-builders, the Sephardic disciples of Saint-Simon. Others, for a variety of reasons, but often psychological causes—some unsundering quality in their temperament—sometimes against their conscious wills, felt incapable of assimilation, incapable of the degree of accommodation which those who seek to alter their habits radically must achieve, and at times remained betwixt and between, unmoved from one bank without reaching the other, tantalised but incapable of yielding, complicated, somewhat tormented figures, floating in midstream, or, to change the metaphor, wandering in a no-man's-land, liable to waves of self-pity, aggressive arrogance, exaggerated pride in those very attributes which divided them from their fellows; with alternating bouts of self-contempt and self-hatred, feeling themselves to be objects of scorn or antipathy to those very members of the new society by whom they most wished to be recognised and respected. This is a well-known condition of men forced into an alien culture, by no means confined to the Jews; it is

a well-known neurosis in an age of nationalism in which self-identification with a dominant group becomes supremely important, but, for some individuals, abnormally difficult.

Over-anxiety to enter into a heritage not obviously one's own can be self-defeating, lead to over-eager desire for immediate acceptance, hopes held out, then betrayed: to unrequited love, frustration, resentment, bitterness, although it also sharpens the perceptions, and, like the grit which rubs against an oyster, causes suffering from which pearls of genius sometimes spring.

The search for security seems to those who are secure a symptom of abnormality, and often irritates them. Less temperamental and quieter personalities among the Jews slipped through the doors of the European world unperceived. Their children mingled peacefully and naturally with its inhabitants. The bolder spirits hammered upon the gates, attracted unwelcome attention, were admitted grudgingly, and never attained to complete ease in their new surroundings. They resorted to various ex-

circle. Felicia knew about my insecurities, and once, when she heard me say I had been the first black to do this or that, she stopped me.

"You know, Roger," she said, "you sound like you're keeping score."

The company of Miller, Bernstein, *et alii* was all heady stuff; I loved it, but it tore me apart. I was enjoying a kind of life that was far beyond the actual or even the imaginative grasp of the poor blacks to whom the serious efforts of my life were supposed to be committed. This was the life where people escaped even the mundane problems that ordinary white people had. It was as if, by entering that world at night, I was betraying everything I told myself I stood for during the day.

ONE MARCH DAY in 1970, I went up to meet a young man in the basement of an Episcopal church on Edgecombe Avenue in Harlem. The young man's name was Sam. Sam and his group were working on housing when I met him, and he didn't want Ford money, just my sense of how he was doing and a connection that would make him feel comfortable when he thought it would be useful to him. Sam was nineteen years old.

It was one of those unusually warm March days,

and it was late in the afternoon when Sam and I parted, too late to go back to the office. I was due at Jean's for drinks with friends early in the evening, so I decided to walk the sixty blocks or so from Sam's Harlem church to Jean's Central Park West apartment.

Abandonment of real estate had already begun to afflict Harlem by the spring of 1970, and as I walked over toward Eighth Avenue, I saw a number of buildings that were gutted shells with paneless windows staring like hollow eyes at a street filled with day people, who in an hour or so would become night people, doing the same thing in the dark as they had done in the sunlight—nothing, because there was nothing for them to do. The buildings that had not been burned out or abandoned for some other reason were old and often crumbling. At many of the corners there were stores, with faded signs and tired-looking vegetables. There was litter and garbage everywhere. The sanitation department didn't seem to visit often, and the people didn't seem to care much.

Some men sat on stoops, other on folding chairs that they had brought from small, musty apartments upstairs. Many of them were engaged in the long, seemingly aimless conversations that so often occupy the hours of old men. But not all of these men were old. Some of them, in their scuffed shoes and patched jackets, were no older than I. Many of them drank

by Isaiah Berlin

pedients in order to keep going, to triumph over their disabilities, to convince the others of their good faith, of their loyalty, of their genius, of their eligibility to the club. The more they protested, the more evidence they provided of the nature of the problem which they constituted and of the difficulties of any simple solution.

It is a well-known psychological phenomenon that outsiders tend to idealise the land beyond the frontier on which their gaze is fixed. Those who are born in the solid security of a settled society, and remain full members of it, and look upon it as their natural home, tend to have a stronger sense of social reality: to see public life in reasonably just perspective, without the need to escape into political fantasy or romantic invention. This tendency to idealisation is most frequently found among those who belong to minorities which are to some degree excluded from participation in the central life of their community. They are liable to develop either exaggerated resentment of, or contempt for, the dominant majority,

or else over-intense admiration or indeed worship for it, or, at times, a combination of the two, which leads both to unusual insights and—born of overwrought sensibilities—a neurotic distortion of the facts.

It is, therefore, not surprising to find this same process in the case of the newly emancipated members of a community which, being a minority everywhere, longed to identify itself with the majority, men who saw themselves in their daydreams as being recognised at last, granted equality and status, or, in the case of more passionate temperaments, as lifted from the status of liberated slaves to that of masters who determine the fate of others. But even if the imagination of such members of excluded groups did not reach this pitch of ardour, they looked for liberation from their anomalous, and often inferior, social status. This tended to take two forms: either conscious demands for equality or superiority, struggles for self-determination and independence on the part of submerged nations, for conquest and glory on the part of rising empires,

for social or economic recognition or domination by militant classes, religious communities, churches, and other human groups. That was one form. The history of nationalism, of socialism, of clerical and anti-clerical movements, of imperialism, militarism, fascism, racial conflict and the like, is familiar enough to us today.

But there is also another form of this craving for recognition: and that is an effort to escape from the weakness and humiliation of a depressed or wounded social group by identifying oneself with some other group or movement that is free from the defects of one's original condition: consisting in an attempt to acquire a new personality, and that which goes with it, a new set of clothing, a new set of values, habits, new armour which does not press upon the old wounds, on the old scars left by the chains one wore as a slave. □

From "Benjamin Disraeli, Karl Marx and the Search for Identity," in *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas* by Isaiah Berlin, edited by Henry Hardy, published by Viking Press in 1980. Copyright © 1979 by Isaiah Berlin.

from containers in brown paper bags.

Farther down, on Eighth Avenue, I came upon the drug center that a young Black Panther friend had shown me months before. The people were brightly colored old clothes, for the most part. Many of the men wore gaudy, light-colored hats. Some of the movement through the thickness of people was flamboyant, a swinging of hips and a dipping of head that communicated the mover was cool and unapproachable. More of the movement was like quiet gliding, making minimal use of arms and legs, moving lips and jaws imperceptibly, passing things from one to another with quick fingers. Some people went in and out of the dark and shoddy bars on the street. Some people just stayed in one place, bending rhythmically from the waist, apparently hearing and seeing nothing. They were, according to the argot of the street, on the nod.

I went on. Farther down Eighth, I saw some small children playing. They were very dark, and some of the boys had on short pants even though it was only March. The boys were throwing around a soiled toy rabbit that had once been yellow, trying to keep it from the two girls who had been playing with them. The girls were not happy; it had apparently been their toy before the boys had come. Just as I approached them, the boy who had the rabbit gave the toy a wild heave. It went high in the air, over my head, and into the doorway of one of the buildings from which I had seen some of the children emerge just a few moments earlier. I ducked into the doorway to get it and was struck, almost repulsed, by

orbital convenience stores. There were no people sitting on the stoops on folding chairs or milk crates. And later, in the low Nineties, it was better preserved, more like the Central Park West that people knew from movies and literature.

Soon I was passing buildings where I had chatted with Saul Steinberg in a room on one evening, or with Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., on another, or with Lukas Foss on another. All of the rooms where I remembered seeing those people were lovely places, and the evenings were usually charged with intelligence and wit. I was only fifty blocks away from Sam and that church basement on Edgecombe Avenue.

Finally, as the shadows of the large apartment buildings facing east were lying long across the park, I came to Jean's building. The doorman, who knew me well by now, smiled and nodded me in, and I went up. A lawyer I knew and liked and his lovely blond wife were already there. Jean was in the back of the apartment, still getting ready. I greeted my friends, poured a lot of Beefeater gin over ice in a wide, short glass, added two drops of dry vermouth and an olive, and then joined my friends looking out of the window at the play of shadows on the still barren trees in the park and at the white people walking home from midtown.

Jean's parents had heard of our relationship and thunder began rolling east from the hills above Hollywood. I never met Jean's father, a circumstance that neither of us regretted. Dr. Stein was a great philanthropist, having given millions to the Jules Stein eye institute at UCLA, but according to his



Roger Wilkins with his stepfather, mother, daughter Amy, and son David, 1978.

the powerful and acrid smell of dried urine that filled the place. I picked up the rabbit, tossed the dirty thing to one of the girls, and kept on walking.

A couple of blocks farther down, at 110th Street, Eighth Avenue became Central Park West. It was not the Central Park West of the large and well-preserved buildings in Jean's neighborhood. The buildings up at the black end of the famous street were old and not well kept. But it was not central Harlem anymore. There were no more run-down and ex-

daughter was given to the vicious and casual use of the word "nigger," as in "What are you doing with that nigger?" Jean told me once that when he heard that I had an estranged wife, he commented, "I hope she has a knife and kills him."

I was amused and endlessly fascinated at how much discomfort our relationship was causing the grand couple out on the Coast. After each of Jean's encounters with her parents, I would do my best to draw details out of her. Finally, though her father

would not meet me, her mother could not contain her curiosity and announced one day, when they were visiting New York, that she was coming over for drinks. Jean could have prevented the meeting, but the imp in her was as strong as the curiosity in me.

Mrs. Stein was already sitting on a couch in the blue library when I got there. She must have been nearing seventy by then, and she was a striking woman with thin, beautiful features, exquisitely kept white hair, a strong body in an expensive blue suit. It was clear, looking at her, how Jean had come by such delicate beauty. We were introduced. Mrs. Stein was polite and so was I. Conversation was sporadic, disjointed, aimless, and difficult until Mrs. Stein hit upon a topic that she thought suitable. She began talking about her work for the Hollywood Canteen during World War II.

The Hollywood Canteen was probably the most famous U.S.O. center in the country. But there was a problem at the canteen, according to Mrs. Stein. It was the communists. The canteen, it seemed, was democratic. Its doors were open to servicemen of the United States, regardless of color. But the communists were always pressing for the white girls to dance with the colored servicemen. Now, the white girls were some of the nicest girls who could be found, according to Mrs. Stein, and what the communists proposed was out of the question. But she and the other powers behind the canteen fought off the communists and kept that rest and rehabilitation center safe for all our servicemen and for the American way. Mrs. Stein informed me triumphantly.

"You know, Mrs. Stein, that reminds me of a story," I replied. "It is said that before World War I, there was an annual cotillion down in Charleston, South Carolina, where the loveliest and the finest young women of the state would be presented. Well, during the war, there was a shortage of men, because so many had gone off to fight. So, one year, the woman who was arbiter of Charleston society and who ran the cotillion called a nearby army base for help.

"'Captain,' she said, 'I want you to send over fifteen of your finest young men to the cotillion tonight to be with some of our finest young ladies.' The captain agreed and then the woman said, 'And, there's just one more thing. Don't send any Jews.' Again the captain agreed.

"The night of the dance, when everyone was assembled, the arbiter saw before her fifteen of the ugliest, blackest buck niggers she had ever seen.

"'There must be some mistake,' she exclaimed in error.

"'No, ma'am,' the leader of the blacks said, 'Cap'n Goldstein, he don't never make no mistakes.'"

Mrs. Stein finished her drink quickly after that, and got up to leave. She told me it had been nice to meet me. I told her that it had been nice to meet her.

Jean howled with laughter until she cried.

TODAY, after several moves back and forth, and several other romances, I am living in Washington with my third wife. Patricia, who is black, teaches at Georgetown Law School. We were married in February 1981, a month shy of my forty-ninth birthday and four months shy of her thirty-ninth. (My second wife was Mary, to whom I was married briefly in 1977.)



Roger Wilkins and Patricia King at their wedding, February 21, 1981

My most recent job was at the *Washington Star*. My title was associate editor, but I was more like a writer in residence. At the *Star*, I made a new friend, a young black reporter named Kenny Walker, who was amused at the reactions of some of the whites there to me. "They ain't never seen no blue-chip nigger like you before," he would say with a laugh.

When I moved back to Washington, I got an apartment in Anacostia, a poor black section of town. After so many years of a thoroughly integrated life, it was curious but comforting to get up in the morning and see only black people in my building and at the places where I went to have my clothes cleaned or shoes repaired. Some people thought my living there was something of a gimmick or a conceit, but it wasn't. The rent was cheap, the view was fabulous, and the constant proximity to ordinary black people was psychologically nourishing.

A few months after the *Star* folded, Kenny and I had lunch at Mel Krupin's restaurant on Connecticut Avenue. When we finished, I went to get a taxi on the southbound side of the avenue. Kenny told me I ought to go over to the northbound side because cabs didn't often pick up blacks going south for fear they were heading toward the ghetto.

"Aw, man, you're crazy," I said.

"No, I'm not," Kenny said. "An awful lot of cabs have passed me by on this side of the street."

"Well, I'll try this one," I said, throwing up my hand as an empty cab came down the street. It slowed and stopped. As I opened the door and stepped in, I turned and grinned at Kenny and said, "Blue-chip." □



Go ahead, you're on the air.

by Alex Heard



ELLOOOOOO, I'm Ken Bennington and this is "Lit Talk." You're on the air.

Hello, Ken?

Yes, go ahead.

Ken, I'm eleven years old and I'm your biggest fan. You're better than sports.

Thank youuuuuuuu. What's on your mind?

Ken, my friend Malcolm says anomalous verbs are full verbs whose principal parts are so irregular that they don't easily lend themselves to classification. I say he's talking about defective verbs. What do you say?

I gotta go with your friend on this one. Defective verbs are ones that are deficient in some of their principal parts and cannot be conjugated the way full verbs can. Sorry.

Well, there goes a zillion dollars.

Aw, but have a heckuva nice day anyway and do call again, and thank youuuuu, I'm Ken Bennington and this is "Lit Talk." Go ahead.

Alex Heard is a writer living in Washington, D.C.

Ken, my name's Jerry and I'm a big fan of yours.

Thanks for calling. What's on your mind?

Who said, "The smithy, a might man is he"?

Nobody . . . thank youuuuuu, you're on the air.

"The smith." Cheap shot, Ken. You didn't know the answer so you got the man on a technicality.

Maybe so, maybe so. Wanna try asking again? Only one Lit Talk Stumper per customer, though.

No, no. I've got a Stumper of my own that I think will get you.

Uh oh, this Mr. Tsevitich again?

That's right, but it's Doctor Tsevitich now.

Finished the dissertation! Congratulations.

Thanks. Okay, who wrote, "Wine comes in at the mouth/And love comes in at the eye:/That's all we shall know for truth/Before we grow old and die./I lift the glass to my mouth,/I look at you, and I cry."

Oh, that's a tough one. You may have me. You think you got me?

I think I got you.

Golly, I'm tempted to go with Swinburne here but something tells me I gotta say—and this is just a guess, I'm groping here—

I thought you would be.

—but I gotta go with “A Drinking Song” by Will Yeats 1910 and I think if you consult the text you’ll find that the last word is “sigh” and thank youuuuuuu please call again and this is “Lit Talk.” You’re on the air.

Ken, I gotta do a term paper and I need another term besides “objective correlative.” Any suggestions?

Yeah, “third moment.” Thank youuuuu, you’re on the air.

Ken? Ken?

Yes, go ahead.

Ken, I’ve got one quick question and I’ll let you go. First I want to tell you what a big fan I am and how much we all appreciate what you’re doing.

Thank you, and where’re you calling from?

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. I’m an associate professor of literature.

Oh say, N.C. has produced a lot of fine personnel. Walker Percy comes to mind for one.

Oh yeah, he’s great.

Word for word, you just can’t beat him. The man uses the language so well.

Definitely. Uh, that reminds me of another thing. Some of us were wondering the other day, what do you think happens after the end of *The Moviegoer*?

I think you’d have to talk to Mr. Percy about that one. To be perfectly honest with you, I’m simply not in the business of writing additional chapters for people. I analyze; it’s a job I enjoy and one I like to think I do well.

You certainly do. Okay, do you think Binx was progressing or not progressing in his Vertical Search at the end?

Progressing.

Okay, great. Okay, who do you think’s America’s best writer, living or dead?

Well, again, you’re out of my line. Frankly this whole business of setting up literary top tens disturbs me. I simply don’t take part in that kind of game, although I have no beefs with people who do.

All right, I respect that. One last question. What do you think’s wrong with book publishing?

Golly, there are so many things ailing it. Television, declining literacy—

The end of the post-World War II baby boom?

Definitely a factor . . . and of course—can I say it?—pursuit of the almighty buck. There are so many things competing for that ever shrinking entertainment dollar that I think publishers are under a lot of pressure to provide enjoyment, not necessarily literature, and they’re passing this pressure right down to the writers. It’s the classic story of a conflict between management and writers, with no single thing to place the blame on.

Yeah, that’s exactly what I said about it.

I think it’s going to have to come to a time when we’ve got to decide if we want literature or laughs.

But don’t you think you can do both? Look at John Irving and *Garp* and all.

Welllll, people always say to me, “Look at John Irving.” Frankly, I don’t wanna look at John Irving. That glare of his scares the heckoutame. No, seriously, John Irving is a heckuva talent.

How do you think he’ll stand up, immortalitywise?

Again, you’re asking for a prediction I can’t make. Tell me who’s going to be healthy and writing in 1990 and maybe I could. As for Irving . . . *Garp* was fun, sure, but a lotta people are saying New Hampshire is junk.

Okay, one last quick one. What do you think of this guy Günter Grass?

I have tons of respect for Günter Grass. Moral, sprawlingly lusty. He’s great.

Okay, great. Look, I really appreciate all the time. My classes aren’t going to believe I finally got you.

Hey, and thank youuuuuuu, and do have a nice class and call again and helloooo this is “Lit Talk.”

Ken, in your line of work you get to know a lot of book- and magazine-publishing guys, right?


I’m proud to number such gentlemen among my acquaintances, yessir.

Great, ‘cause I’ve got this really great book idea that I can’t get anywhere with and I thought maybe you could help me out.

Ummmm. I think we may be running out of time.

What I want to do is a book about all those people who carry their stuff around in bags, and, like, maybe be one for a year or something—

Yep. The clock on the wall tells me we are definitely out of time. Thank you soooooo much for tuning in and please join us again next week. This is “Lit Talk” and I’m Ken Bennington saying, Remember, Literature is Nutritious. □



REPEALING THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The biggest thing in Arkansas since Creation—and when was that, by the way?

by Gene Lyons

We must respect the other fellow's religion, but only in the sense and to the extent that we respect his theory that his wife is beautiful and his children smart.

—H. L. Mencken

THE SUBSPECIES *Homo nesciens arkansas* comprises two distinct varieties: Country, and Country-Come-to-Town. It was ever thus. Back in the bad old days before the invention of polyester suits and communications satellites, however, genuine yokels held all the power in the state we call “the Land of Opportunity.” In fact the first Arkansas antievolution law was not a product of the legislature. Passed on November 6, 1928, the day of Herbert Hoover’s ascension to the presidency, the statute forbidding mention of godless, atheistic Darwinism in public schools was enacted by popular referendum.

A couple of days before the election, advertisements appeared in newspapers across the state. THE BIBLE OR ATHEISM, WHICH? read the headline on one favoring the passage of Act No. 1. But more than a hundred prominent citizens, including two former governors and the editor of the *Arkansas Gazette*—most of them from the sinful metropolis of Little Rock—signed another advertisement, urging common sense. Only three years earlier, after all, in 1925, Arkansas’s neighbor to the east had convicted John Scopes for uttering heresies within the hearing of schoolchildren, and in the process had made the word “Tennessee” a synonym for “benighted.” The people at large, the second advertisement maintained, were not qualified to pass on the veracity of a theory taught

“in every first-class university and college in America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia.” It was not the credibility of science that was at stake, but the state’s reputation.

Voter turnout was heavy, for not only were science and religion contending on the ballot but Arkansas faced an excruciating presidential choice. Al Smith, the Democrat, represented both Demon Rum and the Pope of Rome. Hoover, though, was a Republican, the party of Lincoln. Hayseeds emerged from every God-intoxicated hollow in the Ozarks; automobile and mule jams clogged the flat dirt roads of the Delta. Al Smith won the Wonder State, but evolution lost. The vote for banning biological science was 108,991 to 63,406. Only Pulaski County (Little Rock) dissented.

HAVING MADE a ritual gesture in favor of the Lord, fundamentalists returned to the sleep of ages. Darwin made little headway in the boondocks, but then neither did any other sort of civilized learning. Most persons capable of reason in those districts found out about evolutionary theory anyway. In Little Rock and the other larger towns the law was ignored, albeit with caution. Acquaintances of mine who grew up in country towns tell stories of science teachers’ voices dropping into conspiratorial whispers, of books being slipped to them on the sly as if they were racy French novels. A cruder version of the Moral Majority has been regnant in the Arkansas outback for at least 150 years, after all, without having effected a diminution of freelance sin. Alcohol in drinkable form is still forbidden the rustics across vast swatches of the state.

Gene Lyons is a frequent contributor to Harper's and several other magazines. He lives in Little Rock, Arkansas.

While a federal court in Little Rock wrestled recently with creationism, the school board in Paragould voted not to allow a school prom on the grounds that dancin' leads to drinkin' and drinkin' to lust. Even so, Arkansas leads the nation in teenage pregnancies and ranks high in the incidence of venereal disease. By setting up coherent thought as temptation, Arkansas's antievolution law has probably lured as many young Arkansans to science over the years as it has prevented from hearing about it.

Initiated Act No. 1, in any event, remained on the books for forty years with nary a prosecution. It was removed in 1968 by the United States Supreme Court after a Little Rock Central High biology teacher made an issue of it. *Epperson v. Arkansas* was the second Supreme Court case involving Central High in little more than a decade. The first, of course, concerned racial segregation.

Know-nothingism in a lab coat

ACT 590, or the "Balanced Treatment of Creation-Science and Evolution-Science Act," as adepts call it, has a more socially acceptable pedigree than the 1928 monkey law. Reporters who came to Little Rock to cover the recent trial about this one's constitutionality found no snake handlers or fulminating barefoot hillbillies. Yessir, folks, with Act 590, country has come to town. Dress up an ambitious fraud in a suit made of synthetic fiber, style his hair like a health-spa instructor's, give him a pocketful of credit cards, a push-button phone with a "hold" button, electric windows in his late model car, stick a Bible in his pocket, provide a neatly coiffed wife who knows how to make goo-goo eyes at the back of his head for TV cameras, and that man can play the media like a church organ. The statute's very concept of "balanced treatment" derives from, and therefore appeals to, the idea of journalistic fairness taught in the nation's "Schools of Communication." Are there not, after all, "two sides to every question"? Unfortunately that concept, which is shallow enough when dealing with persons holding a post-Enlightenment world view, ill equips a reporter to get at the truth when confronted with persons who do not. Creationists, you see, do not believe that there is or can be a distinction between the sacred and the secular. All ideas to them are religious ideas. Hence they do not hold themselves to the arbitration of facts, evidence, and logic; they reject the metaphysics of science even while claiming its cultural authority.

Neither do creationists believe, accordingly, in the separation of church and state, although they will prevaricate and squirm like sixteenth-century Jesuits when the question is put to them directly. So if the story of the 1981 Monkey Trial strikes you as ludicrous, which I hope it will, do not therefore be deceived into taking creationism lightly. Theirs is a

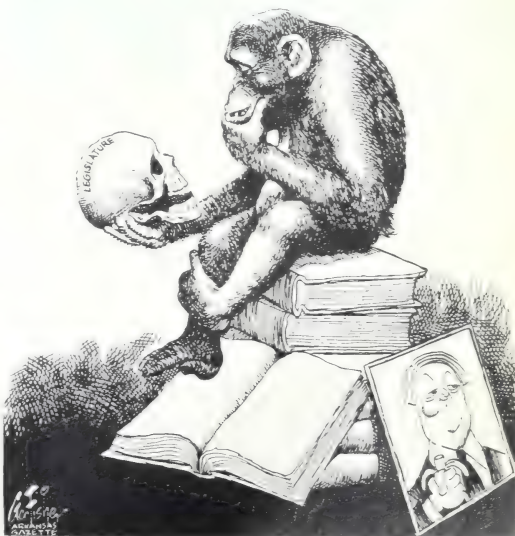
coherent and internally consistent world view. The "scientists" in the movement do science as one does literary criticism, picking among facts and theories for ones that support a preexisting point of view—which in their case is a literal reading of Genesis—and either twisting whatever does not fit, or simply discarding it. Creationism is no more science than is astrology or palm-reading; it is William Jennings Bryan's know-nothingism in a lab coat. Creationists claim the designation "scientific" partly as propaganda, but, as with most propaganda, they are their

[Evolution is] theory only. In recent years [it] has been challenged in the world of science. If evolutionary theory is going to be taught in the schools, then I would think that also the biblical theory of creation, which is not a theory but the biblical story of creation, should also be taught.

—Ronald Reagan, on the campaign trail in Dallas, 1980.

own first victims. Oddly, while not believing in real science, which strikes them as pessimistic, European, and anti-Christian—perhaps even "Jewish"—they believe quite heartily, most of them, in technology and progress. Up to the day of Armageddon, that is. Most would also be shocked to hear themselves described as Social Darwinists, but all are free-enterprise zealots whose views are perfectly congruent with that turn-of-the-century philosophy. And there are a whole lot more of them in California. to come to the point, than there are in Arkansas.

But the Arkansas experience with creationism is instructive. The sponsor of the "Balanced Treatment"



Act was one Sen. James L. Holsted of North Little Rock, a tall, handsome graduate of Vanderbilt University who was at the time president of the Providential Life Insurance Company, a family concern. Creationism zipped through the senate on the last day of the 1981 session, with no hearings and only a few comments from the floor. The house of representatives held no hearings either, having scheduled the bill for a period reserved for "noncontroversial" legislation. Debate consumed all of fifteen minutes, some of which was spent refusing to hear Arkansas's Methodist bishop Kenneth Hicks, who had rushed in vain to the capitol when a member of his flock warned him what was up. The tally there was 69-18.

Better than the circus

ARKANSANS in general are probably no more ignorant than the American public at large, but all the ignoramuses do agree. Political tradition here pardons a legislator who votes on symbolic issues to soothe the prejudices of the mouth-breathing element in the dirt-road churches. Arkansas is more than 90 percent Protestant, the hard-shell sects predominate, and ambitious youths yearn to be television evangelists as others wish to emulate Reggie Jackson or Donny Osmond. No sense, runs the usual logic, in stirring people up; the federal courts can take care of it. Then everybody can whoop it up in the next campaign about meddlin' judges thwarting the will of the people, can get reelected, and can continue to work on the truly important business of democracy, like exempting farm equipment from the sales tax or allowing the poultry industry to load as many chickens as can be jammed into a semi-trailer regardless of highway weight limits.

Indeed, it appears that many of the legislators mistook the creationist bill for yet another in the series of harmless resolutions in praise of Christianity that they customarily endorse. Others were simply gulled. Had scientists uncovered evidence proving Genesis to be biologically and historically accurate? Who could doubt it? Were atheists and "secular humanists" laboring to suppress the truth? It sounded logical. The legislature was besieged by a well-organized phalanx not of backwoods fulminators but of live-wire "Christian" businessmen and doctors' wives from the newer suburbs of Little Rock. The creationists have laid their traps where the money is: among the semieducated who, by their prosperity, deem themselves members of contemporary Puritanism's visible elect, but who cling to the childish theology of their fathers because contemporary life has flooded them with a confusion of moral values that will not compute unless the Bible is accepted as a rule book. At the time of the "debate," only the Moral Majority and a local organization called FLAG (Family, Life, America, and God) seemed to

know that Act 590 had been introduced at all, much less made it to the floor.

IN FACT, Act 590 was not written in Arkansas, and there is reason to doubt that anybody here read it all the way through until after it was already law. Senator Holsted got it from an employee of his, who in turn took it from a group of fundamentalist ministers who received it by mail from its author, a respiration therapist named Paul Ellwanger of Anderson, South Carolina. Ellwanger, founder and proprietor of an organization he calls Citizens for Fairness in Education, wrote it with the help of an outfit called the Institute for Creation Research in (where else?) San Diego. The "scientific" godfathers of creationism are Henry Morris and one Dr. Duane Gish, a preposterous buncombe artist about whom more later. The principal legal consultant was Wendell Bird, also of the ICR and author, for those readers who may be tempted to dismiss creationism as a mere regional delusion, of a very long article in the *Yale Law Journal* three years ago that not only posited creationism as a science but proposed its inclusion in public school curricula to "balance" and thereby "neutralize" the teaching of evolution, which it equated with atheism.

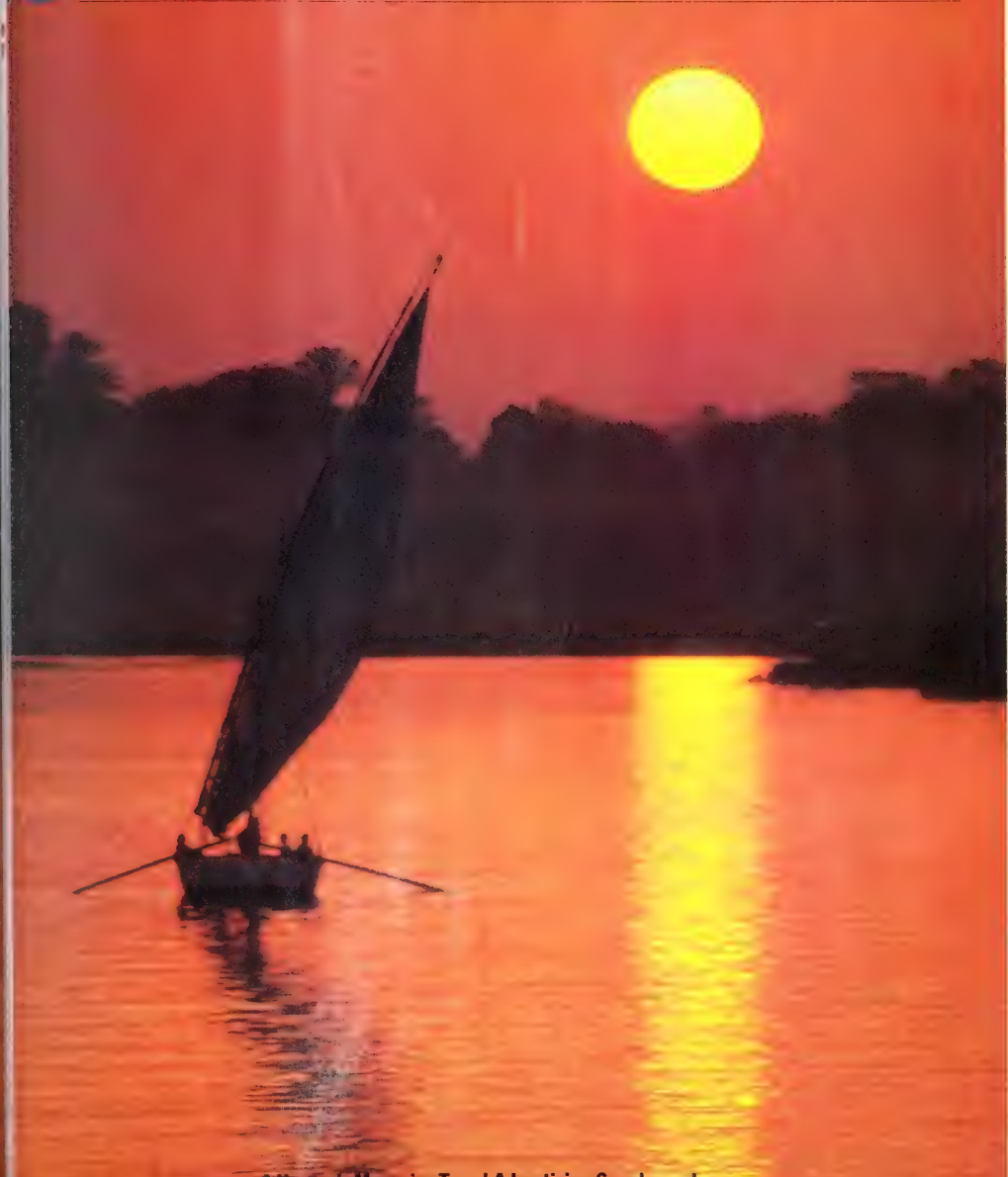
Governor Frank White certainly did not read the creationism bill. A Little Rock bank executive and a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, White ran for office as God's own candidate. The Lord, he said repeatedly during his campaign against incumbent Democrat Bill Clinton, had told him to declare his candidacy. On winning a narrow victory in the Reagan landslide, he declared the deity well pleased. White's equally pious second wife told the press that God had not only introduced her to her second husband but He had even done a turn as celestial realtor, divinely inspiring their choice of a home. After he signed the bill, White boasted to reporters that Arkansas had assumed the scientific leadership of the known world. White asserted that the new law was undoubtedly constitutional. But when asked specifically about the clause forbidding the "establishment of Theologically Liberal, Humanist, Non-theist, or Atheistic religions," the governor confessed that he was ignorant of the text. His office issued a clarification saying he had been thoroughly briefed, but the aide responsible for keeping track of legislation told the *Arkansas Gazette* that to her knowledge nothing of the sort had transpired. Sponsor Holsted told the same newspaper that "of course" his motives were religious, but, he added, "If I'd known people were going to be asking me about the specifics of creation science, I might have gotten scared off because I don't know anything about that stuff." Democratic Attorney General Steve Clark, in a remark that would come back to haunt him, said he had his doubts the law could be defended.

When the educated portion of the citizenry heard

(Continued on page 73)

SUMMER PLEASURES

HARPER'S INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL PLANNER





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SUMMER PLEASURES

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No matter how many times you're reminded of the joys of traveling in fall, winter, and spring, the fact is that summer is the season when you're most apt to take your big vacation. Most Americans do.

To help you plan yours, we've surveyed the world beyond our borders—region by region, country by country—to find out what you'll encounter between Memorial Day and Labor Day in the areas you're most apt to visit. (For those who can't wait to get away, and for those who can't manage to until later on, we've also taken a look at May and September as well.) You'll find descriptions not only of that period's major or most interesting events, but also remarks on the weather you'll experience, the wildlife, the flowers, and the seasonal fruits and vegetables. (How many times have you been in France, just two weeks shy of the short season for those delectable wild strawberries? Or, on a trip to southeast Asia, missed out on the opportunity to sample the durian—that delightful, paradoxically foul-smelling tropical fruit—just because your timing was off?)

No survey can tell you everything you need to know to plan a vacation, so we also point out some not-always-easy-to-locate guidebooks to which you can refer for comprehensive information about out-of-the-way spots not covered in the widely available Fodor and Frommer series. (If your local bookstore doesn't have what you want, try ordering by mail from the Forsyth Travel Library, Box 2975, Shawnee Mission, KS 66201; the Travel Library, Box 249, La Canada, CA 91011; or the Merrimack Book Service, 99 Main St., Salem, NH 03079.)

The various national tourist offices can provide up-to-date information about all the destinations and activities we mention. Addresses and phone numbers are provided for the New York City offices. For the most satisfactory response when you write, state your needs very specifically. If you're planning a vacation around a specific festival, reserve in advance and confirm the event's dates at the last minute.

Bon voyage!

Karen Cure

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COVER: Photograph of the Nile River, Egypt, by Joseph Viesti.

Since much of our information must be gathered in advance, we suggest you verify dates, places, and events when planning a trip.



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EUROPE

Between the blossoming of the almond trees in Portugal's Algarve in February and the grape harvest almost everywhere in late September, Europe gives itself over to its busiest season. Cities and towns host concerts and festivals. The Alps swarm with hikers, and well-known beaches are body-to-body.

Tourist offices can provide you with volumes of information about where to go and what to see; for more pointed recommendations, consult a guidebook. Among the general-interest volumes, Stephen Birnbaum's well-organized *Europe 1982* (\$12.95; Houghton Mifflin) speaks to the curious, slightly adventurous traveler with a bit of money to spend. *Let's Go: Europe* (\$6.95; Dutton) addresses a younger group. The *Blue Guides* (Rand McNally), the *Green Guides* (Michelin), and *Nagel's Guides* (Hippocrene) provide copious commentary on history, art, and architecture. On quaint lodging places, the best are Ian Keown's well-written *European Hideaways* (\$7.95; Crown) and Hilary Rubinstein's eclectic *Europe's Wonderful Little Hotels and Inns* (\$9.95; Congdon and Lattès). Also investigate *Bicycle Touring in Europe* by Karen and Gary Hawkins (\$5.95; Pantheon); and *A Runner's Guide to Europe* by Jere Van Dyk and Aden Hayes (\$5.95; Penguin).

AUSTRIA

Spring brings blizzards of blossoms to alpine meadows and to the hilly orchards of the Wachau region flanking the Danube, while flurries of musical activity descend on fairy-tale Salzburg and gemütlich Vienna. The Riesenrad, the enormous Ferris wheel at Vienna's Prater, opens in April. The melting of the snows in the high country opens up mountain hiking trails and roadways over stunning passes like the Grossglockner. Around the enormous, reed-grown lake known as the Neusiedlersee, millions of birds nest.

Prospective visitors to Vienna should note that the State Opera and the Spanish Riding School end their seasons in June and do not open again until September, and that Sunday-morning performances of the Vienna Boys' Choir are discontinued in July and August.

Events: *Bregenz Festival on Lake Constance:* First-rate concerts in a splendid new hall and on a fine lakeside stage in the Vorarlberg's capital. Mid-July to late August. *Salzburg Festival:* A king among European musical festivals, and

always a sellout. July 26 to August 30.

Guidebooks: The *Michelin Green Guide to Austria* (\$7.95; Michelin); *Nagel's Austria* (\$30; Hippocrene); William Reifsnnyder's *Hut Hopping in the Austrian Alps* (\$5.95; Sierra Club Books).

Information: Contact the Austrian National Tourist Office, 545 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10017 (212-697-0651).

BELGIUM

Americans who stick to Belgian cities deprive themselves of some of this small nation's greatest warm-weather pleasures: strolls along Ostend's breezy North Sea boardwalk or its wide white strand; visits to the Zwin bird sanctuary, where sea lavender purples the marshes in July and August; walks through the wildflower-strewn gorges of the Belgian Lorraine south of Arlon, or in the densely wooded Ardennes; or drives through the begonia fields around Ghent—fabulously colorful from May through September.

Events: *Holy Blood Procession:* Gorgeous and varied pageantry with mime, speeches, songs, tableaux, and floats. Bruges, May 20. *Onnmeegang Pageant:* Splendid recreation of a sixteenth-century royal entertainment—one of the biggest events. Brussels, July 1.

Guidebooks: The *Blue Guide to Belgium* (\$29.95; Rand McNally); the *Michelin Red Guide to Benelux* (\$12.95; Michelin); and Craig Evans's *A Trail Guide to France and the Benelux Nations* (\$7.95; Foot Trails).

Information: Contact the Belgian National Tourist Office, 745 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10151 (212-758-8130).

DENMARK

Even this summer's big celebrations of Castle Year—which will mean open house at some 150 manor houses and castles—don't diminish the importance of the opening of Copenhagen's Tivoli Gardens. Hundreds of thousands of flowers bloom, the lakes sparkle, and musicians and mimes, acrobats and dancers entertain. After sunset, tens of thousands of colored lights flicker overhead, and fireworks occasionally kindle the skies.

Elsewhere, summer weather makes for pleasant walks on fine beaches like those of quiet, old-fashioned Aarø or Zealand, the posh Danish Riviera. Children crowd Legoland (near Billund), where plastic bricks by the million recreate such landmarks as our own Cape Kennedy.

Bird watchers should note that the Tipperne Bird Sanctuary on Holmsland Klit is most active in spring and fall, and ballet lovers should plan their trips around the Royal Danish Ballet's season,

which ends in May and starts again in September.

Events: *Hans Christian Andersen Festival:* Odense, the writer's birthplace, makes a splendid setting for the pageants that comprise this event, and for a concurrent fairy-tale film festival. Mid-July through mid-August. *Copenhagen Jazz Festival:* Ten days of parades, street dances, and open-air concerts featuring the likes of Eubie Blake, Alberta Hunter, Gerry Mulligan. Early July.

Guidebook: *Nagel's Denmark-Greenland* (\$43; Hippocrene).

Information: Contact the Danish National Tourist Office, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10019 (212-582-2802).

FINLAND

The Finnish summer's most important feature is sunshine—nineteen hours a day of it in the south, and even more above the Arctic Circle, where the sun doesn't set for seventy days straight, beginning in mid-May. Finns wait for the season "as a prisoner waits for parole," in the words of the writer Charles Barnard.

Dozens of festivals celebrate its arrival; at the *prazdniks* north of Joensuu, you can gorge on the local fish and dairy dishes and delectable Karelian pies. Summer theaters hold forth in such unlikely spots as the lovely, piney Pynnikki National Park, near Tampere. And in the capital, charming restaurants open on the lakeshores; some punctuate their menus with summer specialties like river trout doused with dill-sprinkled cream sauce, or fresh berries laid on whipped cream and bathed in warm caramel. Cloudberry (golden yellow and not too sweet), currants and deep-red raspberries are all in season.

Events: *All Saints Prazdnik:* One of the larger of these traditional Orthodox church and folk festivals. Homantsi, June 14. *Savonlinna Opera Festival:* Operas and occasional concerts staged in this lovely lakeside spa town's heroic fifteenth-century stone castle, and in the world's largest wooden church, nearby. July 4 to 25.

Guidebook: *Nagel's Finland* (\$30; Hippocrene).

Information: Contact the Finnish National Tourist Office, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10019 (212-582-2802).

FRANCE

Come April and May, clouds of apple blossoms turn the Normandy countryside into a pink-and-white miracle. Gorse and broom flame bright gold in Brittany. Paris is exquisite, and the Côte d'Azur acquires a languorous air, as flowers ex-



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plode in its gardens. In the Loire River valley, winter's sober browns change to a radiant green. The river, which shrivels to a streamlet by summer's end, is broad and majestic.

The season is so lovely, in fact, that July and August almost pale by comparison. There are queues at the Eiffel Tower and mobs in front of the *Mona Lisa*. Cars creep bumper to bumper along scenic roads. Restaurateurs and boutique owners close up for vacation.

Yet these very crowds make for gaiety when experienced from the umbrella'd shade of a sidewalk café. And summer is the season for *fraîches des bois*, those delicious French strawberries; for fresh asparagus; and for hiking along the footpaths that crisscross the French Alps. On the Riviera, though it's hot enough to wither the blossoms, the parade of sheiks, starlets, and hangers-on swells to carnival proportions. In Normandy, the weather warms up enough for sunning on those long, golden beaches. A subtle haze softens the light in a way that has enchanted artists for years—here, as in neighboring Brittany.

The Loire valley is crowded enough to make it sensible to steer clear of main roads in midday. Or sign up for a ballooning tour organized by the Bombard Society (10100 Santa Monica Blvd., Ste. 2065, Los Angeles, CA 90067; 213-277-2672) complete with champagne landings on the châteaux lawns.

With September's arrival, beach crowds thin out, campgrounds clear, and hotel rooms empty; but air and water stay warm, making for pleasant holidays on the Riviera.

And beginning late in the month, it's time for the grape harvest, Rabelais's "good September soup."

Events: *Gypsy Gathering:* Processions, with gypsies from all over Europe. Stes. Maries-de-la-Mer, May. *Cannes International Film Festival:* Quite apart from the films, you go for the sheer spectacle of this BP gathering. Mid-May. *Strasbourg International Music Festival:* Luscious food and great music. Mid-June. *24 Hours of Le Mans:* As much for the crowds and the noise as for the cars. June 19 to 20. *Bastille Day:* Sheer madness on Paris's Boulevard St. Michel. July 14. *Great Festival of Cornouaille:* One of the nation's most colorful traditional events. Quimper, fourth Sunday in July.

Guidebooks: *The Green Guides* to several regions (\$7.95 each; Michelin); the *Red Guides* to Paris (\$3.25) and France (\$12.95), both from Michelin; the *Gault-Millau Guide France* (chattier, more attentive to *nouvelle cuisine*) and the *Guide Kléber* (more descriptive), available in French bookstores here; the *French Farm and Village Holiday*

Guide (\$8.95; Unipub), for self-catering accommodations and bed-and-breakfasts; *Let's Go: France* (\$4.95; Dutton); Karen Brown's *French Country Inns and Châteaux Hotels* (\$7.95; Travel Press); and *A Trail Guide to France and the Benelux Nations* by Craig Evans (\$7.95; Foot Trails).

Information: Contact the French Government Tourist Office, 610 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10020 (212-757-1125).

GERMANY

Every year in early April, visitors from around the world make their way to Germany's Bergstrasse to see the blossoms of the fruit and almond trees, to the plains of the Upper Rhine two weeks later, and, around May 20, to the pancake-flat countryside alongside the river Elbe.

Then summer begins in earnest, as hardy sea-lovers flock to North Sea resorts such as sea-swept Sylt, and knick-

er-clad, sturdily booted mountain lovers head for the Black Forest.

Along the Romanticische Strasse, through the Grimm Brothers' countryside of half-timbered houses and traditional folk costumes between Würzburg and Füssen, 2,000-year-old villages are thrumming; and the Rhine is busy with cruisers showing off scenery as overwhelming now as it was in the Grand Tour days.

Events: *Munich Opera Festival:* The place to see European opera stars at a time when most houses here are dark. Early July to early August. *Wurstmarkt:* The wine-lover's answer to Oktoberfest. Bad Dürkheim. September 11 to 14 and 17 to 20. *Oktoberfest:* More boisterous every year. Munich. September 18 to October 3.

Guidebooks: *The Green Guide to Germany* (\$7.95; Michelin); the *Red Guide to Germany* (\$14.95; Michelin).

Information: Contact the German National Tourist Office, 630 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10111 (212-757-8570).

BARGING THROUGH EUROPE



The canals that crisscross rural Belgium, Britain, France, Holland, and Ireland are crawling with hotel barges and self-drive boats throughout the spring, summer, and fall, and considering the appeal of this kind of vacationing, that's not hard to understand. You float along all day, tying up whenever you see something that interests you, then walk or bicycle into the nearest town. And then when the crowds seem too much with you, head back to your barge and sit back and sun yourself as the world slips sweetly by. The following companies offer either craft for hire or hotel-barge cruises during which somebody else does the cooking and the driving.

Horizon Cruises, Ltd., 7122 W. Main St., Belleville, IL (618-397-7524), in France; *Floating through Europe*, 271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016 (212-685-5600), in England, France, Belgium, Holland; *Inland Waterways*, Preston Brook, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 3AL, England, *Blakes Holidays*, Wroxham, Norwich, Norfolk NR12 8DH, England, and *Hoseasons Holidays, Ltd.*, Sunway House, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 3LT, England—all operating in Britain; and in Ireland, the *Emerald Star Line*, St. James's Gate, Dublin 8, Ireland.

GREAT BRITAIN

No one will tell you that you won't need an umbrella here. But spring and summer give you other things to think about:

- Daffodils in the Lake Country in spring.
- Big sales in the London department stores early in July.
- Bicycling from inn to inn—on your own or with tour groups.
- Golfing in Scotland, the birthplace of the sport.
- Hiking through mountains and moors, from inn to inn along the country's exceptional long-distance footpaths.
- Sports—England's national manias: soccer, rugby (a "ruffian" sport played by gentlemen), cricket, polo, and, in Scotland, Highland games.

Events: *Hobby Horse Celebration:* A fabulous-looking hobby horse and a mad procession to a maypole. Padstow, Cornwall. May 1. *Chelsea Flower Show:* As much society fling as it is floral extravaganza. May 18 to 21. *Bath International Festival of Music:* House and garden tours, concerts, dance and opera, in stately Georgian settings. June 1 to 6. *Glyndebourne Festival Opera:* A national, but oh-so-social, institution with its 75-minute-long intermissions (designed for leisurely champagne picnics from hampers carried in by chauffeurs). Third week in May until the first in August. *Derby Stakes:* One of the world's most celebrated horse races—and a real carnival. At Epsom, Surrey. June 2. *Royal Ascot:* Top hats, elegant bonnets, and the Queen herself. Ascot, Berkshire. July 15 to 18. *Wimbledon Lawn Tennis*

Championships: Grass courts, strawberry-and-cream teas—and top-flight tennis. June 21 to July 3. *Henley Royal Regatta:* Another Society occasion that begs for flannels, blazers, straw boaters, flouncy dresses. July 1 to 4. *Edinburgh International Festival:* Europe's best music and drama, both classical and avant-garde, plus the Festival Fringe (occasionally very avant-garde), and much more. August 22 to September 11.

Guidebooks: Stephen Birnbaum's *Great Britain and Ireland 1982* (\$10.95; Houghton Mifflin); *Let's Go: Britain and Ireland* (\$5.95; Dutton); *Red Guides* to Great Britain and Ireland (\$12.95; Michelin) and London (\$3.25; Michelin). For details on sights: the *Blue Guide to England* (\$29.95; Rand McNally); the *Blue Guide to the Channel Islands* (\$24.95; Rand McNally); the *Blue Guide to London* (\$16.95; Rand McNally); the *Green Guide to London* (\$7.95; Michelin).

The British Travel Bookshop (680 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10019) stocks a good many of these titles, plus an assortment of others focusing on single cities and regions and special interests—ruins, fishing, cycling, good beer, and the like.

Information: Contact the British Tourist Authority, 680 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10019 (212-581-4700).

GREECE

No wonder some Hellenophiles call spring their favorite season. The hills that look so bare and rocky at the dry height of summer are speckled with wildflowers. Butterflies gather in the trees of Petaloudes, and scatter like autumn leaves when you jostle the branches. The water is warm enough for swimming by May.

Nonetheless, summer isn't as bad as the ninety-degree temperatures might lead you to expect. That is thanks partly to the low humidity, partly to a relaxed local lifestyle. Whiling away an afternoon in a local *taverna* risks no exertion. Nor do pilgrimages to lonely, hallowed Delphi, surrounded by golden cliffs and hills that turn a glowing rose at sunset; or island-to-island cruises; or stay-put vacations near some blue-dappled harbor, in some hill-climbing village of whitewashed houses.

Events: *Epidaurus Festival:* Performances of Greek drama in an ancient open-air amphitheater. July to mid-August. *Athens Wine Festival:* Food and drink and wild carryings-on. Mid-July to mid-September.

Guidebooks: The *Blue Guide to Greece* (\$24.95; Rand McNally); the *Blue Guide to Athens* (\$18.95; Rand McNally); *A Trail Guide to Italy, Greece, and East-*



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ern Europe by Craig Evans (\$5.95; Foot Trails).

Information: Contact the Greek National Tourist Organization, 645 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10022 (212-421-5777).

IRELAND

Even in blustery winter, you can take in rollicking performances of traditional Irish music while sipping Guinness in some out-of-the-way pub; or search out your ancestors in damp parish churches.

Yet there's no disputing the fact that summer is prime time in Ireland—for good weather, especially in May and June—and for:

- Pony treks in windswept Connemara and the sea-washed Dingle Peninsula.
- Back-road tours in bright-painted, horse-drawn gypsy wagons.

- Bicycle trips on country roads.
- Hiking in the red sandstone country of Kerry and West Cork, or in County Galway's bare, rocky Maunturks and Mweelreas.
- Hurling and Gaelic football.

Events: *Lisdoonvarna Folk Festival:* An Irish Woodstock. Second weekend in July. *Dublin Horse Show:* A high point in the Dublin social season. August 3 through 7. *Irish Sweets Derby:* The star races of a racing-mad nation. June. *Rose of Tralee International Festival:* Ireland's biggest annual bash, with a varied program that attracts some 100,000 people. Late August. *National Pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick:* Praying thrice en route, some 20,000 worshippers—some barefoot or on their knees—trek up this holy 2,500-foot mountain. Fourth Sunday in July.

Guidebooks: Stephen Birnbaum's *Great Britain and Ireland 1982* (\$10.95; Houghton Mifflin); *Let's Go: Britain and Ireland* (\$5.50; Dutton); *Guide to the National Monuments in the Republic of Ireland* by Peter Harbison (\$5.40; Gill and Macmillan, Ltd., Dublin); *Irish Walk Guides* (£1.25 each; Gill and Macmillan, Ltd., Dublin).

Information: Contact the Irish Tourist Board, 590 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10036 (212-246-7400).

ITALY

As early as mid-February spring is chipping out a toehold here, with the blossoming of the almond trees in Sicily. But you don't truly know that it has arrived until artichokes, fresh peas, and baby lamb come into season; and until the pink camellias bloom along Lago Maggiore in the north. The hot weather brings throngs of sitters and sippers to Rome's outdoor *caffes*. Italian opera flourishes at provincial theaters; the audiences are as entertaining as the singers. (For performances at the big houses, arrive before season's end in June.) And *gelato*—Italian ice cream—tastes better and better, whether laced with liqueurs or chunky with nuggets of strawberries.

Events: *International Festival of Two Worlds:* Founded by Gian Carlo Menotti in 1957 and celebrated for its varied programming. Three weeks beginning in mid-June. *Palio di Siena.* Medieval costumes and bareback horse races. Siena. July 2 and August 16.

Guidebooks: *Green Guide to Italy* (\$7.95; Michelin); *Blue Guide to Northern Italy* (\$22.95; Rand McNally); *Blue Guide to Rome* (\$17.95; Rand McNally); *Let's Go: Italy* (\$5.50; Dutton); Robert S. Kane's *Italy A to Z* (\$7.95; Doubleday); *Red Guide to Italy* (\$14.95; Michelin).

Information: Contact the Italian Gov-

ernment Travel Office, 630 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10020 (212-245-4825).

LUXEMBOURG

Once the European entry point for budget travelers, this nation is especially pretty in spring and summer, when lilacs color the roadsides; when buttercups, clover, daisies, and poppies bloom in the woody Ardennes region; and gorse blossoms turn the hillsides gold. Strawberries are abundant in late June.

Event: *Dancing Procession Honoring St. Willibrord:* Crowds of villagers dancing and swaying to an eerily repetitive melody. Echternach. Mid-May.

Guidebooks: *Red Guide to Benelux* (\$12.95; Michelin); and *A Trail Guide to France and the Benelux Nations* by Craig Evans (\$7.95; Foot Trails).

Information: Contact the Luxembourg National Tourist Office, 801 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017 (212-370-9850).

NETHERLANDS

Picnic Holland offers a real spectacle in April and early May, as the vast bulb fields bloom and turn the landscape all the brilliant colors of a Kodachrome ad: *Floating through Europe* (271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016; 212-685-5600) schedules cruises to catch the show.

June is the sunniest month here. And there are colorful cheese markets in Aalkmar (Fridays) and Gouda (Thursday mornings). Summer Saturdays are the time to see the windmills at Kinderdijk grinding slowly around.

Bird watchers should make note of the mud-walks in the shallow Wadden Sea (among the Continent's most important bird sanctuaries).

Guidebooks: *Red Guide to Benelux* (\$12.95; Michelin); *Nagel's Holland* (\$38; Hippocrene); *A Trail Guide to France and the Benelux Nations* by Craig Evans (\$7.95; Foot Trails).

Information: Contact the Netherlands National Tourist Office, 576 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10036 (212-245-5320).

NORWAY

Summers here begin in May and June with the blossoming of fruit trees in the west, and by July and August the weather is warm enough for swimming in the fjords. Norwegians go hunting for wild strawberries, and celebrate midsummer night on June 23rd with bonfires and fireworks. And visitors come from all over to view the silver-blue fjords, the stunning

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glaciers, and the silent forests of the North Cape, up in a land where daylight lasts for six to eight weeks and nobody sees a sunset until August.

Events: *Bergen International Music Festival:* Ballet and classical music, May 26 to June 9. *Kongsberg International Jazz Festival:* One of the larger of the summer musical diversions involving jazz, which is a Norwegian mania. June 30 to July 4.

Information: Contact the Norwegian-Swedish National Tourist Office, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10019 (212-582-2802).

PORTUGAL

The blossoming of the almond trees in the Algarve every February ranks among the Continent's most scrumptious sights. Madeira's season runs from December through April.

But it's in summer that most travelers visit Portugal, and the life is lively then at coastal resorts such as Albufeira, the St. Tropez of the Algarve, and Sesimbra, looking sunnily southward from its perch on the edge of a broad bay.

Pousadas, atmospheric inns in historic buildings, run full; plan ahead.

Events: *Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Fatima:* As many as a million make this moving pilgrimage, May 13. *Festa da Nossa Senhora da Agonia:* One of the nation's best-known traditional festivals. Viana do Castelo. Early August.

Guidebooks: *Green Guide to Portugal* (\$7.95; Michelin); *Red Guide to Spain and Portugal* (\$12.95; Michelin).

Information: Contact the Portuguese National Tourist Office, 548 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10036 (212-354-4403).

ROMANIA

There are towns here that make you feel as if you've gone back in a time machine to the 1930s, and sections of the countryside that look like something from a Millet painting, where the women wear the voluminous skirts and vast scarves of long ago and even in summer, the crowds are never big enough to detract from the old-fashioned look of the landscape.

Guidebook: *Nagel's Rumania* (\$26; Hippocrene).

Information: Contact the Romanian National Tourist Office, 573 Third Ave., New York, NY 10016 (212-697-6971).

SPAIN

When the searing Mediterranean sun wits the last almond blossom, it's easy to gain an appreciation for the Spanish cus-

om of afternoon siestas; and for Spain's
 delightful summer food—fish dishes,
 old soups, icy sangria, and frozen *blanco*
negro (a lemon-and-cinnamon ice
 served with strong cold black coffee).
 another Spanish delight, the nation's
aradors—hostelries installed in hand-
 some restored palaces and monaster-
 ies—get booked up in advance; plan
 ahead.

Events: *Feria de Abril:* Brightly col-
 ored carnival tents, Andalusian cos-
 mes, flamenco dances, parades, bull-
 fights. Seville. April 27 to May 2. *Fiesta*
San Fermin: Pamplona's pride, im-
 mortalized by Hemingway. July 6 to 15.

Guidebooks: *Green Guide to Spain*
 7.95; Michelin; *Blue Guide to Spain*
 19.95; Rand McNally; *Red Guide to*
Spain and Portugal (\$12.95; Michelin;
 Robert S. Kane's *Spain A to Z* (\$6.95;
 and McNally).

Information: Contact the Spanish Na-
 tional Tourist Office, 665 Fifth Ave.,
 New York, NY 10022 (212-759-8822).

SWEDEN

almon are running from May through
 September, and the intense blues and
 deep greens of the sweeping, lake-dotted
 restlands look especially brilliant. And
 the weather is ideal for visiting beaches
 on Gotland Island, and for hiking from
 hut to hut along King's Trail in wild
 Breck National Park.

Stockholm's pleasures are special, too:
 strolls at the big Skansen folklore center,
 the world's prototypical village museum;
 ballets at the rococo Drottningholm
 Court Theater.

Events: Swedes celebrate warm weath-
 er three times—on Walpurgis Night
 (April 30), with bonfires; on Labor Day
 (May 1), with speeches and parades; and
 on midsummer (June 25), with maypoles,
 floral wreaths, fiddling, and dancing.

Guidebook: *Nigel's Sweden* (\$30; Hip-
 pocrene).

Information: Contact the Norwegian-
 Swedish National Tourist Office, 75
 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10019
 (212-582-2802).

SWITZERLAND

Once the snows melt, tiny flowers burst
 to bloom in the alpine meadows, and
 the trails above the mountain resorts
 open up for hiking in the Alps, one of the
 continent's great experiences. The air is
 as crisp as a Granny Smith apple, the views
 of white peaks behind jagged peaks,
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York, NY 10028; 212-831-8249). Another unique Swiss experience: the Chocolate Lover's Tours of Switzerland offered by *Journeyworld International* (155 E. 55th, New York, NY 10022; 212-752-8308).

Events: *International High Alpine Ballooning Weeks:* You can watch the ascensions, or, for a fee, join a crew. Mürren. June 21 to July 3. *Montreux Jazz Festival:* Musicians from around the world perform. July 6 to 26.

Guidebooks: *Green Guide to Switzerland* (\$7.95; Michelin); *Switzerland: The Inn Way* (\$4.95; Berkshire Traveller Press) by Margaret Zellers; *A Trail Guide to Austria, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein* by Craig Evans (\$6.95; Foot Trails).

Information: Contact the Swiss National Tourist Office, 608 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10020 (212-757-5944).

U. S. S. R.

In summer, Russians eat some of the world's best ice cream and drink *kvass*, made from fermented bread. And Kiev citizens turn out for strolls along the promenade of the River Dnieper.

Balletomanes take note: the seasons of the Kirov and Bolshoi ballets end in May and don't begin again until September.

Events: *White Nights of Leningrad:* A real cultural extravaganza, timed to coincide with the magical period when the mesmerizing glow of the midnight sun illuminates the elegant Czarist structures along the Neva. June 21 to 29.

Information: Contact the Intourist Information Center, 630 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10020 (212-757-3884).

YUGOSLAVIA

From the Adriatic Highway along Yugoslavia's seacoast, the views take in islands, a jagged shore, a dotted line of beaches, and pretty fishing villages crowding the pines and olive trees of the rugged inland mountains.

Before you pack your bags, however, remember that May and September share summer's good weather, but with half the number of tourists, and at reduced prices. (If you do brave June, July, and August, stick to smaller towns.)

Events: *Dubrovnik Summer Festival:* Opera, plays, concerts, and dance in the squares and churches of a fifteenth-century town. July 10 to August 25. *Zagreb Review of Original Folklore:* Peasant groups in a one-of-a-kind event. Late July.

Information: Contact the Yugoslav National Tourist Office, 630 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10111 (212-757-2801).

SOUTH AMERICA

Markets, folklore, and real antiquities are what this vast and varied continent is all about—that, and some of the planet's most glorious natural scenery. Some of this is at its best between May and September—and some of it isn't. Most of the coastal desert between the Ecuador border and a point about 200 miles north of Santiago endures dry heat all year. The Andes are clear but chilly from April through November. And there are plenty of festivals—if not so wild as those that lead up to Lent, certainly merry enough by American standards. The feast of Corpus Christi, a continentwide bash, falls on June 18 this year.

Some South American countries have tourist offices in the U.S. For information about the others, contact embassies or consulates, and consult a good guidebook while you wait. Stephen Birnbaum's *South America 1982* (\$10.95; Houghton Mifflin) describes cities, driving trips, and special-interest vacations. John Brooks's *South America Handbook* (\$24.95; Rand McNally) is comprehensive, a bible. For cultural commentary, see *A Traveler's Guide to El Dorado and the Inca Empire* by Lynn Meisch (\$8.95; Penguin).

ARGENTINA

If you're traveling here between May and September, the bright part of the picture is that the stupendous Igassu Falls, one of the continent's wonders with its butterflies and fabulous bird life, looks best between August and November. And the ski season above Bariloche, in South America's Switzerland, is in full swing from July through September.

Guidebook: *Backpacking and Trekking in Chile and Argentina* by Brad Hilary and John Pilkington (\$6.95; Brad Enterprises).

Information: Try the Argentine Embassy, 1600 New Hampshire Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20009 (202-387-0705).

BRAZIL

South America's greatest tourist attraction, Rio de Janeiro ranks among the world's most fascinating cities. There are those long crescents of surf-bashed coastline, bare-peaked mountains, that

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cobalt-blue, island-studded bay, fabulous views, and boisterous nightclubs.

But Brazil is also the location of the mighty Amazon. There are colorful markets stocking everything from dried boa constrictor heads to crocodile teeth. The Wedding of the Waters, a 50-mile stretch of ripples and whirlpools at the point where the brownish Rio Negro joins the muddy Rio Solimões to form the Amazon, is also memorable. And, thanks to a tropical climate, all of this is eminently visitable the year around.

Information: Try the Brazilian Embassy, 3006 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20008 (202-797-0100).

CHILE

You don't need to wait for winter in North America for your next ski trip. In the Southern Hemisphere, the months of May through October are ski season in Chile; Portillo, the largest of the nation's ski resorts, offers some of the very best of its usually excellent conditions in July and the first weeks of August.

Events: *Day of the Virgin of Carmen:* Plenty of dancing, costumes, and splendid devil masks. July 16.

Guidebook: *Backpacking and Trekking in Chile and Argentina* by Brad Hilary and John Pilkington (\$6.95; Brad Enterprises).

Information: Lan Chile Airlines.

COLOMBIA

No visit to South America should omit a stop at Bogotá's Gold Museum: the institution is positively stuffed with pre-Columbian artifacts in solid gold—millions of dollars' worth of armor, instruments, and tiny sculpted animals.

But this equatorial nation also gives you the chance to sunbathe on lovely beaches at spirited coastal resorts such as those on San Andrés Island. Or go camping in dense forests full of jaguar, parrots, and puma (at Tairona National Park, near Santa Marta). Or travel Amazon tributaries to isolated Indian settlements, or visit the orchid capital of the world (Medellín).

Though bullfighting, one favorite local spectator sport, can be seen only between December and February, generally dry conditions make May through October a good period to visit.

Events: *Festival del Tango:* All of Medellín slides around for days. June. *Feast of San Pedro y San Pablo:* Processions, masses, pyrotechnics, bullfights, and assorted other mad revelries. Neiva. Mid-to late June.

Information: Contact the Colombian Government Tourist Office, 140 E. 57th

St., New York, NY 10022 (212-826-0660).

ECUADOR

For hiking, climbing, angling, wildlife-watching, and local color, few countries in the world can match this nation of avocado groves and banana plantations, raw petroleum towns and wild jungles, parrots and toucans, markets and magical islands, and fabulous mountains inhabited by Indians who still do their weaving on ancient backstrap looms. You can haggle with felt-hatted Indians in ponchos for rope shoes or shawls in big markets like Ambato's; eat baked guinea pig in Riobamba; buy pottery, ironwork, and Panama hats in the lovely colonial town of Cuenca, the nation's craft center.

Or meet a witch doctor on excursions from Misahualli. Or go for a cruise in the deluxe ship known as the *Flotel Orellana*. Or dip your toes in Limoncacha's piranha-infested lake, if you dare. Or paddle a dugout canoe down the Coca River.

Mountain lovers are offered short scrambles—and long hauls like the one up 19,342-foot Mt. Cotopaxi, the world's highest active volcano. And then there are the Galapagos Islands, which inspired the young Charles Darwin. The many Galapagos cruises give you a chance to see the nearly extinct tortoises for which the *Islas Encantadas* were renamed, along with flightless cormorants, finches, and iguanas that look like scale-model dinosaurs.

One of the beauties of Ecuador for summer travelers is that April through October is the dry season. June and July are cold, but they're also clear. Though Andean nights generally fall to the twenties and thirties, days usually warm up to the sixties and seventies. Throughout the year, coastal lowlands and the Galapagos have temperatures in the eighties and enough humidity to frizz your hair.

The festivities in highland towns during late June for the feasts of Saints Peter, Paul, and John are a bonus.

Information: Contact the Ecuadorian Embassy, 2535 15th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20009 (202-234-7200).

PERU

Traveling to this 496,223-square-mile nation and not seeing Cuzco and Machu Picchu would be like going to Greece and missing the Parthenon.

Yet these are only the best-known attractions of this particularly diverse country. In addition to the Pacific-bound desert on the west, the jungle lowlands on the east, and the high Andes in between, Peru also boasts ruins of more

than one highly developed civilization not only the relics of the Inca, which are well known, but also the remains of the Chimu Indians (at Paramonga and Chachan), the Paracas Indians (at Paracas), the Nazca Indians (whose mysterious lines can be seen on airborne sightseeing excursions out of Nazca), and the Chavin Indians (at Chavin, near Huaraz). The vast collection at Lima's Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology can enrich your understanding of all this.

Equally compelling in their own way are different ways:

- The ultrascentic train trips from Cuzco to Puno and to Machu Picchu.
- The drive from Lima through the mountains into the Amazonian jungle. Pucallpa—one of the most spectacular trips in the hemisphere.
- The boat trip out of Puerto Maldonado through the country's southeastern jungle along the 700-mile-long Rio Madre Dios, an Amazon tributary.
- The hike along the Inca Trail, one of the world's great treks.

Rainy season runs from mid-November through March—so the months from May through September are fine for visiting.

Event: *Inca Sun Festival:* A riotous blowout, celebrating the summer solstice at Saqsayhuaman, overlooking Cuzco.

Guidebooks: *Nagel's Peru* (\$38; Hippocrene); *Backpacking and Trekking in Peru and Bolivia* by George and Hilary Bradt (\$7.95; Brad Enterprises).

Information: Try the Peruvian Embassy, 1700 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20036 (202-833-9861).

VENEZUELA

This oil-rich nation, washed by the Caribbean, boasts Latin America's highest per capita income, and Caracas is contemporary, cosmopolitan, and (at rush hour) congested; even the poorer sections battle with TV antennas.

Yet the same country whose capital has been nicknamed the Ciudad de los Autopistas also lays claim to some of the continent's wildest terrain. Of this, Angel Falls, the world's highest waterfall, can be visited only by river, and only when the river is navigable—that is, between June and December. And the equally wild Venezuelan Andes enjoy clear skies from April through October. The sparsely settled Orinoco jungle and half-million-square-mile Gran Sabana, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *World*, as tangled as when it caught the author's imagination, are better visited in other months.

Information: Contact the Venezuela Tourist Bureau, 450 Park Ave., New York, NY 10022 (212-355-1101).

NORTH AMERICA

Except along Mexico's Caribbean and Pacific coasts, where winter is really high season, vacation destinations in North America are almost as busy as those in Europe in summer.

CANADA

From the moment the peach trees blossom in the orchards of British Columbia's Okanagan Valley and the tulips flower in Ottawa, every vacation area here, from the sea-swept Maritimes to the boulder-strewn Pacific coast, is bustling. Travelers from all over the world are exploring Quebec City's crannied lanes, riding horse-drawn caleches through old Montreal, sipping aperitifs in the cafés of Toronto's chic Yorkville, crowding Victoria's dowager Empress Hotel for high tea, and enjoying all that is best in the nation's great outdoors:

- Canoeing in the waters of Ontario's vast Canadian Shield country, or in the bare, beautiful Barren Grounds of the Arctic, often by the eerie half-light of the midnight sun.
- Raft trips down British Columbia's wild Chilcotin River.
- Hikes through remote regions of the nation's fabulous national parks. Or along the 45-mile-long rock-bound West Coast Trail, hacked into the cliffs as an escape route for shipwrecked sailors. Or in utterly wild Auyuittuq National Park on Baffin Island, polka-dotted with bright blossoms during June and July.
- Sailing off Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, all scattered with picturesque fishing villages.

Summer is also the season for festivals, and almost every town in the country stages its yearly bash.

Events: *Shaw Festival:* Five months of plays by Shaw and his contemporaries. Niagara-on-the-Lake. May 5 to September 26. *Stratford Shakespeare Festival:* Some of the world's best theater. Mid-May through mid-November. *Shediac Lobster Festival:* Gourmand's heaven in New Brunswick. July 6 to 11. *Calgary Stampede:* The rodeo and state fair that turns a town upside down. July 9 to 18. *Great International Bathtub Race:* The prototype for bathtub races all over the world. Vancouver to Nanaimo, British Columbia. July 14 to 19. *Klondike Days:* Gold Rush revisited. Edmonton, Alber-

ta. July 21 to 31. *Canadian National Exhibition:* The oldest, largest annual exposition in the world—a state fair and more. Toronto. August 18 to September 6.

Guidebooks: *Canada 1982* (\$10.95; Houghton Mifflin); Elliot Katz's *Complete Guide to Backpacking in Canada* (\$8.95; Doubleday Canada); *Country Inns of Canada* by Anthony Hitchcock and Jean Lindgren (\$5.95; Burt Franklin); *Country Bed and Breakfast Places in Canada* by John Thompson (\$5.95; Berkshire Traveller Press).

Information: Contact the Canadian Government Office of Tourism, 1251 Avenue of the Americas, Ste. 1030, New York, NY 10020 (212-757-3583).

MEXICO

Incredible as it may seem to those who know Mexico well, there are many people who think of the U.S.'s neighbor to the south mostly in terms of its big resorts and its border towns. But Mexico also means fiestas, siestas, lovely beaches without a house in sight, markets and fishing villages, pottery and tequila, jungle-covered mountains, ornithological spectacles with few equals on earth, and angling that lures fishermen from around the world.

Don't be deterred by the fact that the months from May through October are considered the rainy season here. That means a cooling couple of hours of rain at siesta time. Coastal areas are a few degrees hotter than the highlands—but neither is more than a few degrees warmer than in winter.

Bullfights and mountain climbing are out of season. But the colorful nationwide celebrations for Corpus Christi on June 18 and Assumption Day fall during this period, as does the El Grito ceremony (September 15), which occasions gatherings in Mexico City and other city-hall squares around the country as madly crowded as Times Square on New Year's Eve. This is also the time for some of the world's best deep-sea fishing off Baja.

The Sea of Cortez is known for spectacular wildlife watching, especially in blossom-beautiful April and May: travelers on cruises see whales arcing and blowing or even mating and calving, and a fantastic, boisterous variety of brown and blue-footed boobies, cormorants, frigate birds, grebes, gulls, hummingbirds, pelicans, and others.

From one end of the country to the other, there are national parks to explore, not to mention the ruins of ancient civilizations, and even the archaeologically ignorant will be impressed by those at Teotihuacan, 30 miles east of Mexico City; at Mitla, in Oaxaca; at Uxmal and Chichén Itzá, in the Yucatán; and at Pa-

lenque, in Tabasco—probably the most striking of all the Mayan sites. Mexico City's National Museum of Anthropology, home of the original of the oft-reproduced Aztec Calendar Stone, will give you background.

Or you could just settle into one of those famous resorts: after April, rate at even the most luxurious plummets (sometimes by more than half).

Events: *Lunes del Cerro:* Costume dancers perform in Oaxaca—a town known for its brilliant fiestas. Mid-July *Chichén Itzá Equinox:* On the vernal and autumnal equinoxes, the light strikes the Castillo Pyramid in a way that makes it look as if Kukulcan the snake-god is crawling down the wall.

Guidebooks: Stephen Birnbaum's *Mexico 1982* (\$10.95; Houghton Mifflin); Kat Simon's *Mexico: Places and Pleasures* (\$5.95; Crowell); *Backpacking in Mexico and Central America* by Hilary and George Bratt (\$5.95; Bratt Enterprises); *Nagel's Mexico* (\$49; Hippocrene).

Information: Contact the Mexican National Tourism Council, 405 Park Ave. New York, NY 10022 (212-755-7212).

CARIBBEAN & BERMUDA

Make no mistake about it: the Caribbean is as idyllic in summer as in winter. Temperatures rise just a few degrees, and rainfall usually increases only slightly. Yet because so many travelers are heading elsewhere, room rates drop by as much as half. And you also find more of the peace and tropical quiet you travel to the islands to enjoy.

A good guidebook will steer you to the resort that will suit you best. La Keown's *Caribbean Hideaways* (\$5.95; Harmony Books) is tops for good writing about the small and the extraordinary. Stephen Birnbaum's *Caribbean 1982*, edited by Marcia Wallace (\$10.95; Houghton Mifflin) is also excellent.

ANTIGUA

During May's Sailing Week, the international yachting set descends on this 208-square-mile landfall, and stages parties in the hotels every evening. In the day, time they compete not only at ocean racing, but also in tugs of war, a greased pole race, and spinnaker-flying contests. Rum punch flows and things really hum

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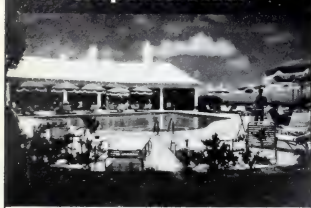
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The week-long Carnival, which ends on the first Monday and Tuesday of August, means more of the same, plus steel bands, calypso, parades—and lots more punch, of course. In between times, visitors live the life of Riley on the beautiful beaches, which are the island's principal attraction.

Information: Contact the Antigua Department of Tourism, 610 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10020 (212-541-4117).

ARUBA

On this long, skinny sandbar of an island, the Kibra Hacha trees are spangled with tiny yellow blossoms in May, and from then until July, the flamboyant trees bloom scarlet. But things are no wetter than they are than at any other time of year—this is blue-sky country. It is also perpetually cooled by the trade winds, and scattered with odd-looking divi-divi trees, bent to a 45-degree angle by this stiff, steady breeze.

The beaches, the island's other main topographical feature, are of the endless variety, and beach hiking is as popular as is gambling in the hotels' big casinos.

Information: Contact the Aruba Tourist Bureau, 1270 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020 (212-246-3030).

BAHAMAS

The bougainvillea, hibiscus, poinsettias, and yellow elders are in bloom from May through September. Anglers are going out for amberjack, barracuda, grouper, shark, and snapper in the astonishingly clear turquoise waters around these 700-odd islands.

Otherwise, it's business as usual here. Snorkelers are marveling at the Exuma National Land and Sea Park. The competitive sign up for regattas. The acquisitive practice handing over their credit cards in Freeport shops, and the indolent content themselves with lording it over the hermit crabs on their own corner of the islands' 700 miles of beach. And then on the week of July 10, everyone takes a few days off for Independence Week with parties, parades, and fireworks.

Information: Contact the Bahamas Islands Tourist Office, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020 (212-757-1611).

BARBADOS

Rolling, beach-ringed Barbados—lapped by the crystalline Caribbean on one shore and pounded by the surly Atlantic on the other—gets considerably more rain in summer than in winter, but the downpours are usually brief enough to render

them more blessed than bothersome, especially since they have the oleanders, ginger lilies, and hibiscus blooming up a storm, making this small, pretty island even prettier still.

Beginning in late June, the islandwide Crop Over folk festival livens things up with a series of concerts and parades that climaxes with a singing-and-dancing Cane Cutter's Spree.

Information: Contact the Barbados Board of Tourism, 800 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017 (212-986-6516).

BERMUDA

Bringing clear skies and temperatures ranging from the mid-seventies to the mid-eighties, summer is high season in 21-square-mile Bermuda. Bougainvillea, morning glories, oleanders, and passion flowers are blooming. All the hotels book up well in advance. And cricket is in season from May until September (when the rugby season begins on this sporting landfall).

Information: Contact the Bermuda Department of Tourism, 630 Fifth Ave., Ste 646, New York, NY 10020 (212-246-6053).

BONAIRE

Residents of this 24-mile-long volcanic island, as dry and cactus-dotted a bit of Caribbean-washed desert as its neighbor Aruba, celebrate St. John's Day on June 24 and St. Peter's Day on June 29—and then get back to the serious business of snorkeling, scuba diving, and bird watching, which is what island life here is all about. The diving is some of the Caribbean's best, and so is the birding: there are probably more flamingoes than you've seen in your lifetime.

Information: Contact the Bonaire Tourist Information Office, 685 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10022 (212-838-1797).

CAYMAN ISLANDS

Long the well-kept secret of a few dedicated fishermen and beach lovers, the Caymans define the term "low key": so far, you will find no glitzy hotels. You make your own fun—go fishing or scuba diving, or trekking down seven-mile-long West Bay Beach. Or, simply, do "Nothing, thank God!" as the late Richard Joseph once commented. July and September usually have the most rainy days.

Information: Contact the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism, 420 Lexington Ave., Ste. 2312, New York, NY 10017 (212-682-5582).

CURAÇAO

Ceremonies and parades on slender, 38-mile-long Curaçao, the largest of the Netherlands Antilles, commemorate Labor Day (May 1), Memorial Day (May 4), Independence Day (July 4), and Curaçao Day (July 26). But for most of the summer, water sports are the order of the day—together with shopping excursions to the luxury boutiques of pastel-painted Willemstad, one of the prettiest of all Caribbean towns. This is blue-skies country, too, studded with cacti and weirdly bent divi-divi trees, just like neighboring Aruba and Bonaire; you can expect good weather throughout your stay.

Information: Contact the Curaçao Tourist Board, 685 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10022 (212-751-8266).

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

New hotels are going up all the time here, and the north coast, where you'll find the most beautiful of the country's beaches, is getting its share of the development. Tennis is big, and among the island's golf courses are two designed by Pete Dye which are ranked among the world's best.

In summer, rates at resorts outside the capital drop by about forty percent; and Santo Domingo stages its big Merengue Festival (July 24 to August 4), with dance contests, art exhibits, parades—and a lot of spontaneous, rum-soaked merriment.

Information: Contact the Dominican Tourist Information Center, 485 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022 (212-826-0750).

GUADELOUPE

Hiking to waterfalls and steaming fumaroles is a favorite pastime, and topless sunning on the long, lovely beaches raises few eyebrows. And no less than Jacques Cousteau has rated the waters around nearby Pigeon Island among the world's finest for diving.

To these year-round pleasures, summer adds extra treats. Pineapples are in season from April through August and mangoes from June through September. The vivid orange flowers of the flamboyant tree, the bougainvillea, and hibiscus dot the lush landscape with the bright colors of a Creole costume. In June, you can watch the sugar cane being harvested and sample this woody-sweet wonder fresh out of the field. Bastille Day is celebrated with great parades and pyrotech-

nics, and in mid-August, the lively Fête des Cuisinieres occasions a free, five-hour banquet.

September begins the island's two-month-long rainy season. (Some of the larger hotels even close.) But even then, you can enjoy Guadeloupe's other best feature—terrific food.

Information: Contact the French West Indies Tourist Board, 610 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10020 (212-757-1125).

HAITI

Exotic, tropical, and culturally distinctive enough to rate coverage in no less than *National Geographic*, this dramatic nation anchoring the island of Hispaniola on the west is not so much a haven for beach lovers (though the strands are there), as it is a magnet for explorers. They are lured by teeming Port-au-Prince and its cramped, crannied, and wonderful Iron Market; lovely, colonial Jacmel, with its black sand beach; and the gingerbread-trimmed houses of Cap-Haïtien, site of the fabulous fortress La Citadelle.

The heat is inescapable. Wear a hat and cool clothing.

Information: Contact the Haiti Government Tourist Bureau, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020 (212-757-3517).

JAMAICA

Its forested hills, gleaming white beaches, sparkling waterfalls, and scattered lime-green bamboo thickets give this oblong, 4,411-square-mile island an appealing diversity. There are beaches, golf courses, and tennis courts, but when you've had your fill of them, you can go out to explore a plantation, or watch a green-and-golden world slide by from a bamboo raft afloat on the beautiful Martha Brae or Rio Grande rivers as well.

In July, during Carnival, parades and music round things out.

Information: Contact the Jamaica Tourist Board, 866 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017 (212-688-7650).

MARTINIQUE

On this lush French island, you can feast on bananas and breadfruit, langoustes and fish straight from the sea. You can tangle with the dense green forest on the footpath that ascends dormant Mt. Pelée; or shop for luxurious things French in the Capital, Fort-de-France (part Nice, part New Orleans—but in miniature). Or go sightseeing; this is one of those islands where the sights are really worth a detour—the former Paris of the

Caribbean, the ghostly St. Pierre, destroyed by an eruption in 1902; the restored banana plantation Leyritz; the ruins of La Pagerie, which Napoleon's Josephine called home as a child; and some of the Caribbean's loveliest scenery. Bastille Day is summer's big deal.

Information: Contact the French West Indies Tourist Board, 610 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10020 (212-757-1125).

PUERTO RICO

The nightlife, hotels, and poverty that many Americans imagine when they think of Puerto Rico are only a part of the picture on this friendly 3,400-square-mile island. It also boasts 700 miles of beach, a lush and mountainous backbone, waterfalls, a rain forest and coastal desert, unspoiled offshore islands, plantations of sugar cane and pineapples, and tiny inns and cheery guesthouses; hardly Miami, in short.

Summer offers its quota of special pleasures—among them deep-sea fishing and cockfighting through good U.S. soloists. The Casals festival draws good A.S. soloists, chamber groups, and orchestras (May 28 to June 12 this year). And there are beach bonfires islandwide on June 24 for the Feast of St. John the Baptist, and pa-

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rades in Loiza Alden on July 25.

Information: Contact the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Tourism Company, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019 (212-541-6630).

ST. MARTIN/ ST. MAARTEN

This half-Dutch, half-French island is a go-as-you-please sort of place, offering a smattering of Caribbean pleasures but making a big deal about none of them. Tennis and water sports are there, of course. And shopping—in Philipsburg, the capital of the Dutch side, and in drowsy, smaller Marigot, capital of the French half. And beaches—some three dozen of them. And country roads that roll and meander from the peaceful St. Martin countryside to somewhat more built-up St. Maarten. Add to that good restaurants on both sides, and you have a package that sells itself well enough to stay busy even when much of the rest of the Caribbean is slumbering.

Information: Contact the French West Indies Tourist Board, 610 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10020 (212-757-1125), and the St. Maarten, Saba, and St. Eustatius Information Office, 445 Park Ave., Ste. 903, New York, NY 10022 (212-688-8350).

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

It's the combination that you come to enjoy: tiny, beach-edged, and mostly mountainous Tobago is placid and very old-fashioned. Trinidad is oil-rich, hustly-bustly. But even this landfall has its natural wonders—the Asa Wright Nature Center, home to the only accessible colony of cave-dwelling Guacharo birds, and the Caroni Bird Sanctuary, where you can watch mangrove trees seem to explode in flame as a flock of scarlet ibis descends on them.

June through September are markedly rainier than other times of year; May and September would be better for a visit.

Information: Contact the Trinidad and Tobago Tourist Board, 400 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10017 (212-838-7750).

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

This trio of American landfalls offers a little something for everyone: beautiful beaches, inexpensive accommodations,

and campgrounds, on St. John; the busy sophistication of hilly St. Thomas; and the small-town quiet of Danish-settled St. Croix. You can make up a vacation that includes a few days at each one, or travel back and forth by boat or by air. The less congested summer conditions make this sort of thing just that much easier to arrange.

Information: Contact the U.S. Virgin Islands Division of Tourism, 10 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020 (212-582-4520).

AFRICA AND THE MIDEAST

Whether or not you'll want to travel to Africa between May and September depends on where you're going. The towns and villages along the Mediterranean coast can be temperate enough, but as you head southward toward the Sahara, the heat builds. In the game parks and around the equator, your choice of season usually has more to do with the rains than the heat. June, July, and August are the most popular times for visiting some areas, while the high season in others runs from November through February.

The Mideast is almost uniformly hot and dry the year around.

EGYPT

The scenery is exotic: palm groves and mud-brick hovels, snowy-sailed feluccas and dingy tugs, a zoo's bounty of birds. But there is also something a bit otherworldly about the Nile. You feel it at the Sphinx and the Pyramids; at awesome Karnak, with its stupendous Great Hall; and again in the Valley of the Kings, in Luxor proper—a visit here can be haunting.

Summers may seem too hot for sight-seeing. But those scorching temperatures do drive away other visitors, so those who dress for the weather and confine their rambles to mornings and late afternoons can enjoy an experience proportionately more poignant. Nile cruises can more often be booked at the last minute, and cost less than from October through May.

Guidebook: *Let's Go: Greece, Israel, and Egypt* (\$5.50; Dutton).

Information: Contact the Egyptian Government Tourist Office, 630 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10020 (212-246-6960).

ISRAEL

In this historic nation you can see temples built around the time of Jesus, cosmopolitan cities, Arab towns and Bedouin camps, fishing villages full of goats, camels, and donkeys. In Jerusalem, there's the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus's road to Calvary, Temple Mount, and the Western Wall (particularly moving on a burning-bright Saturday morning when crowded with Orthodox Jews and Hasids offering prayers). Not to mention Galilee, green and mountainous, and the Mount of Beatitudes, from which Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount. The weather is hot, so be prepared.

Guidebooks: *The Bazak Guide to Israel* by Avraham Levy (\$7.95; Harper & Row) and *Let's Go: Greece, Israel, and Egypt* (\$5.50; Dutton); *Footloose in Jerusalem* by Sarah Fox Kaminker.

Information: Contact the Israel Government Tourism Administration, 350 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10001 (212-560-0650).

KENYA

This Texas-sized, strand-edged Colorado on the Indian Ocean offers amazing scenic variety and fabulous parks—giant Tsavo National Park, itself the size of New Jersey; 44-square-mile Nairobi National Park, just a short distance from East Africa's biggest city; and Nyan-daria National Park, home to *Treetops*, where Princess Elizabeth was staying when she learned she had become Queen. The 17,058-foot Mount Kenya, Africa's second-highest mountain, is here; the adventurous can climb it easily. And then there's the fabulous Rift Valley, where escarpments rise a mile straight up from the valley floor. And the beaches along the Indian Ocean.

Wildlife watching is usually best after the end of the "long rains" in April and May, and the "short rains" in November and December. June, July, and some of August can be cool.

Information: Contact the Kenya Tourist Office, 60 E. 56th St., New York, NY 10022 (212-486-1300).

MOROCCO

Though even labyrinthine Fez and torrid Marrakesh probably won't live up to your fantasies, you will still collect enough images to last a lifetime here: souks crammed with leather goods and caftans, Ali Baba slippers, carpets, gold. Smells of grilled meats, mint tea, incense. A babel of squawking chickens and street

peddlers. And heat: the weather can flatten you in summer, when the mercury hits the nineties and keeps climbing as you move south or head toward July and August. If you want to consider the Atlantic coast in summer, that's fine; elsewhere, wear light clothes.

Information: Contact the Moroccan National Tourist Office, 521 Fifth Ave., Ste. 2800, New York, NY 10017 (212-421-5771).

SOUTH AFRICA

With its mountains, beaches, prairies, and garden cities, this complex nation never fails to astound first-time visitors. The range of flowers and blossoming trees around Cape Town is extraordinary, especially during the six-to-eight-week period beginning in late August. East of Cape Town, you encounter handsome Durban, with its beaches and spiffy suburbs; and the peaks of the Drakensberg, which offer skiing from June through August. To the north is wildlife-rich Kruger National Park, ideally visited between May and mid-October, when the grasses are low enough to make it easy to spot the animals.

Guidebook: *Reader's Digest Illustrated Guide to Southern Africa* (\$25; Reader's Digest Association of Southern Africa).

Information: Contact the South African Tourist Corporation, 610 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10020 (212-245-3720).

TANZANIA

Mount Kilimanjaro is not Tanzania's only landmark. This long, wide country bordering the Indian Ocean also claims the Serengeti Plains, where some two million animals can be seen in a migratory spectacle that has few equals on earth. Plan your trip for late May or early June, and keep your fingers crossed. There's no saying when the animals will move, and they can be seen in such numbers only for a few days, but even the slimmest chance for a look warrants a gamble.

Other destinations that are less widely known, but equally worthwhile, include the 102-square-mile Ngorongoro Crater, fairly crawling with wildlife; and Ruaha and Tarangire National Parks, which preserve an Africa of long ago.

Game-viewing is best from June through September (when temperatures average in the 70s) and from mid-December through February (when the weather tends to be hotter and drier). The latter period is peak season for tourists.

Information: Contact the Tanzania Tourist Corporation, 201 E. 42nd St., New York, NY 10017 (212-986-7124).

TUNISIA

Tunisia accustoms you to veiled women and turbaned men, fresh figs and jasmine, Land Rovers and dunes, oases and camels, and scenery straight out of *Star Wars* (the bizarre bar scene was shot at Matmata's *Hotel Sidi Driss*).

You can tour Carthage's ruins, near Tunis. Or stroll through the lovely, brilliantly white summer resort colony Sidi Bou Said. Or, 300 miles south of the capital, soak up the sun at the country's best-known beach area, the sunny island of Kjerba, the Land of the Lotus Eaters of Homer's *Ulysses*. (Present-day voyagers will find a *Club Med* with a nude beach, and an assortment of other hotels.)

In May and June, watermelons, peaches, grapes, and plums are in season; roses, jasmine, and pansies are blooming; and temperatures average in the seventies (about ten degrees higher in the south). In the south, August is simply too hot; with hundred-plus-degree temperatures, even the nudists swelter.

Information: Contact the Embassy of the Republic of Tunisia, 2408 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20008 (202-234-6650).

THE PACIFIC AND ASIA

From the jungles of Thailand to the snowy ski resorts of Australia and New Zealand, this vast region offers a climate which, though often humid, makes them all eminently visitable between May and September.

Of the several Asia guidebooks, the best is the Far Eastern Economics Review's *All-Asia Guide* (\$8.95; Charles E. Tuttle).

AUSTRALIA

It's winter in June, July, and August on the island continent that gave the world koala bears and Rupert Murdoch. That means skiing in the Snowy Mountains at resorts like New South Wales's Thredbo and the Victorian Alps' Mount Buller.

Except in the mountains, however, Australian winters are not the chilly experience that North Americans associate with the season, and sophisticated Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and points between enjoy temperatures that would be

early spring for other nations; more northerly districts, around Darwin, Alice Springs, and Brisbane, have weather as close to ideal as you can get.

Those who aren't praying for snow may find Australia's flowering green springs and crisp autumns even better for vacationing—especially if you include visits to the popular East Coast resorts outside Sydney or the stunning, fragile Great Barrier Reef with its exotic coral formations.

Events: *Darwin Beer Can Regatta:* Blood-red sunsets and beer-can boats. *June, Cunnamulla-Eulo Festival of Opals:* Held in Cunnamulla and Eulo, Queensland, this zany event includes not only the Australian Lizard Racing Championships, but also the Australian Sandhill Digging Championships. August 21 to September 5, *Redland District Strawberry Festival:* The main event is the World Strawberry Eating Contest.

Guidebooks: *Australia: Traveler's Survival Kit* by Tony Wheeler (\$5.95; Lonely Planet); *Maverick Guide to Australia* by Robert Bone (\$8.95; Pelican).

Information: Contact the Australian Tourist Commission, 1270 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020 (212-489-7550).

HONG KONG

One of the world's great commercial capitals, the British Crown Colony defines the word "teeming." Stores are crowded with hand-embroidered, goose-down-stuffed, and hand-lacquered products from the mainland, and with goods from Gucci, Vuitton, Nikon, Leica. Sometimes the prices are better than those in New York—sometimes not; know your numbers before you go. Custom-made clothing is cheaper than in the U.S. Confer with the tailors on arrival, and plan to stay long enough—at least three days—to allow for fittings.

Meanwhile, it's no problem keeping busy: take the tram to the Peak for a view of city and harbor—sapphire blue, ship-dotted. Or sign up for cooking lessons—at the *Chopsticks Cooking Centre* (Kowloon Central, Box 3515, Kowloon, Hong Kong) or the *Hong Kong Electric Company's Home Management Centre* (Box 915, GPO, Hong Kong).

Or take the hydrofoil to the Portuguese colony of Macau, slightly seedy and oozing with atmosphere.

The climate here is subtropical, so prepare for hot, humid weather.

Guidebook: *The Apa Guide to Hong Kong*, edited by Leonard Lueras and R. Ian Lloyd (about \$17.50; Apa Productions, Singapore).

Information: Contact the Hong Kong Tourist Association, 548 Fifth Ave.,

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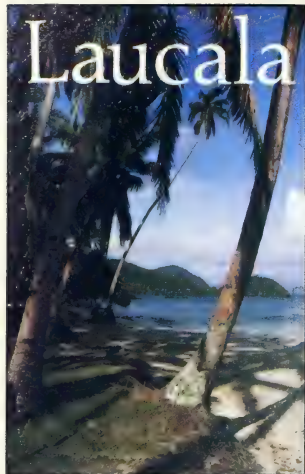
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New York, NY 10036 (212-947-5008); and the Macau Tourist Information Bureau, 60 E. 42nd St., New York, NY 10017 (212-697-3694).

INDIA

India is on the other side of the globe—and light years distant in every other way. The way of life, standard of living, and culture are so very different from the American that if it were only for the chance to study them, a trip to India would be the voyage of a lifetime.

But the sights are stunning, too: Delhi's Red Fort and the eerily silent ghost city of the Moghuls, Fatehpur Sikri; Agra's Taj Mahal; the bathing ghats on the Ganges; the elegant rose-colored palace of Jaipur; teeming, unsettling, astonishing Calcutta; sophisticated Bombay; the temples at Bhubaneswar and beach-lovely Kovalam at India's southernmost tip. Not to mention the gloriously mountain-ringed lakes of Kashmir where you can sojourn in a Victorian houseboat; and the mountains of the north, where trekking is popular.

Most people will tell you that summer is not the best time to visit India. But though the months from June through September are the rainy season here, you'll find only intermittent showers that leave the countryside lusciously green. The months preceding the rains are the hottest, driest, and dustiest—but the mountains are cooler, full of blooming rhododendrons.

Events: *Rath Yatra:* Indians come to the town of Puri in Orissa state from all over, to lend their hand at drawing the massive, heavy chariots bearing statues of Hindu gods. June 23. *Amar Nath Yatra:* Begins the season of pilgrimages to sacred caves near Pehlgaon, a walk of several days' duration into the mountains from Srinagar. Thousands hike to this remote spot. August 4. *Janmastami:* Dances and pageant parades honor the Lord Krishna, one of the best-loved gods of the Hindu pantheon. Celebrated with special festivity in Bombay and in Mathurai, near Delhi, where Krishna was born. August 12.

Guidebooks: *India and Nepal: A Travel Handbook* by Nina Casimaty (\$6.50; International Publications Service); Barbie Engstrom's *India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka* (\$14.50; Kurios).

Information: Contact the India Government Tourist Office, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020 (212-586-4901).

JAPAN

With its mountains and rice paddies, quaint old fishing villages and spare, tra-

ditionally furnished inns, Japan disappoints very few who make the long trip here: even those who remain unmoved by the monochromatic beauty of the gardens, or resist the varied pleasures of the Japanese table, still respond enthusiastically to the people; Japan must be one of the few countries in the world where "high season"—summer, here—doesn't mean less than hospitable treatment.

That's true not only in the sort of out-of-the-way places that endear the nation to repeat visitors but also in the usual destinations of the first-timer: frenetic Tokyo; beautiful Kyoto—at once quite up-to-date and elegantly old-fashioned; Mount Fuji, that great conical symbol of the nation; the lush subtropical island of Kyushu, with its emerald hills and aquamarine bays, rice terraces and tidy villages, hot springs and volcanoes; and, on the island of Hokkaido to the north, the hot springs resort of Noboribetsu, site of some of the country's last remaining mixed public baths—strangely decorous places, where great clouds of steam conceal bodies from one another rather better than the washcloth-sized "towels" provided for the purpose.

The climate, which resembles New York's, gives you hot summers plus autumn weather that is crisp and cool and splendid springtimes filled with the spectacle of the cherry blossoms. Beginning about April 10 in the south, they move northward for the next four weeks, leaving the last blossoms in Hokkaido in mid-May.

Baseball is a big deal in summer, and sumo wrestling, always fascinating to visitors, can be seen in Tokyo in May and September and in July in Nagoya.

Events: *Aoi Matsuri:* Kyoto's Kamigamo and Shimogamo shrines stage a grand procession recalling imperial days in Japan's former capital. May 15. *Grand Festival of Toshogu Shrine:* Parades and processions are common in Japan in summer; this one in Nikko features close on a thousand warriors in full armor. May 17 to 18. *Gion Matsuri:* Kyoto's most famous festival, at Yasaka Shrine, got its start in the ninth century with a procession designed to free the city from a pestilence. Much widespread merriment surrounds the event, which continues the custom of the procession. July 16 to 17. *Awa Odori:* Night-and-day, fancy-dress, music-in-the-streets revelry in Tokushima, on Shikoku—all the more colorful because this smallest of Japan's major islands has retained more of the customs and atmosphere of rural Japan than busy west-central Honshu. From August 15 to 18.

Information: Contact the Japan National Tourist Organization, 45 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020 (212-757-5640).

MALAYSIA

Most Americans who visit Malaysia confine their travels to the west coast of the country's mainland, on the peninsula south of the Thai border—to the capital at Kuala Lumpur and the island of Penang to the north. The latter mixes pretty beaches and the vestiges of the British colonial era; and there is a certain fascination to the capital's crazy-quilt culture, a pastiche of the Moslem, the Hindu, the Christian, and the Taoist.

Travelers in Asia for the second time, as well as more adventurous first-timers, would be well advised to explore the still undeveloped east coast, full of tangled jungles, pristine white beaches, and unspoiled fishing villages on stilts; the wild, swampy, jungly Malaysian state of Sarawak (its capital, Kuching, straight out of Joseph Conrad); or the craggy 13,455-foot summit of Mount Kinabalu, high above the cottony jungle clouds, among Southeast Asia's foremost wilderness experiences.

Except on Kinabalu, tropical weather prevails in Malaysia the year around. However, traveling on the east coast between May and September puts you in the area at the time that giant leathery turtles are coming ponderously ashore to lay their eggs.

Guidebook: The *Apa Photo Guide to Malaysia* (about \$14.50; Apa Productions, Singapore) outclasses all others with its informative, well-written text and sumptuous color photos.

Information: Contact The Malaysia Tourist Development Corporation, 420 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017 (212-697-8994).

NEPAL

Lying astraddle the Himalayas, Nepal was hailed as a latter-day Shangri-La when it was opened to the outer world some three decades ago, and insofar as any idyll can survive once the word gets out, that's still true. There are dozens of shrines and temples, and you're seldom out of sight of jagged white peaks; the lowlands are lush and jungly, sheltering one-horned rhinoceroses, elephants, tigers, leopards. The *Tiger Tops Hotel* at the Mahendra National Park ranks among the world's best game-viewing edges, and the mountaineering opportunities are unequaled—not only for climbers but also for hikers.

From June until August it's hot and rainy, and clouds shroud the mountains and hide the views. The months from October through May are generally considered the best time to visit Nepal; from mid-September to mid-March, during



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Nepal's winter, travelers must dress warmly.

Guidebooks: Nina Casimaty's *India and Nepal: A Travel Handbook* (\$6.50; International Publications Service); and *India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka* by Barbie Engstrom (\$14.50; Kurios).

Information: Try the Department of Tourism, Ram Shah Path, Kathmandu, Nepal.

NEW ZEALAND

Stretching a thousand miles from north to south, this land of fjords, glaciers, peaks, and hot springs has winter June through August, and begins to see spring in September. For much of this period, there's skiing in the impressive Southern Alps. Yet much of the rest of the country enjoys weather only slightly chillier, only a little cloudier, and only a bit rainier than in summer—and diehard skiers may want to pick the New Zealand winter (otherwise generally considered a second-best time to visit) to make the trip. You can still shoot the rapids of the rolling Shotover River, see the shimmering Glow Worm Grotto at Waitomo (like a sky full of blue-green stars) and explore the sulphur-smelling thermal areas around Rotorua. But the Milford Track, one of the world's great hiking trails, can't be tackled in winter because of the rain.

Guidebook: The two-volume *Mobil New Zealand Travel Guide* by Diana and Jeremy Pope (\$8.95 and \$11; Charles E. Tuttle).

Information: Contact the New Zealand Government Tourist Office, 630 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10020 (212-586-0060).

PACIFIC ISLANDS

Since the days of the European explorers, the islands that litter the Pacific have exerted such a powerful allure that the reality is hard put to measure up to the fiction. Tahiti, Moorea, Bora Bora, Fiji, and Samoa: those are magical names. Yet even in the built-up, air-conditioned spots, you can find *pensions* or small bungalow colonies where the island atmosphere is unmistakable.

All the islands enjoy warm weather the year round, but most have a rainy season that you may want to avoid (even though it may mean no more than an hour or two of precipitation per day).

Richard A. Goodman's *GoodTravel Tours* (5332 College Ave., Oakland, CA 94618; 415-658-2060) offers a wide variety of unusual trips ("Transcultural Psychiatry of the South Pacific," a "Voyage to Pitcairn Island," and "Women in the

South Pacific", for instance).

Information: Contact the Pacific Area Travel Association, 228 Grant Ave., San Francisco, CA 94108.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Returning from a journey through this immense land, *New York Times* editor-in-chief Abe Rosenthal vividly described the rivers of humanity that swept him along, and his own feeling of being a tiny drop of water in a very large sea.

China is like that. There are impressive palaces and tombs to be seen, and the mountains and the changing light, which has a softness and clarity that mesmerizes photographers. Peking's Temple of Heaven, the Ming Tombs, Shanghai and Canton and the Great Wall spin memories that will last for years.

But it's the people that make the show.

Spring and fall are the optimal seasons for visiting, but summers are acceptable, if hot. However, China is a huge place, and you'll find a variety of conditions as you move around.

In southern regions, the climate is subtropical—hot and humid from April

through September, chilly in winter, and eminently pleasant in between times. In Peking and the northern cities, the frosty winters are flanked by pleasant springs and falls, while the summer months, particularly July, get quite hot. Peking gets more rain than usual in July and August.

Guidebook: *Nagel's China* (\$65; Hippocrene).

PHILIPPINES

This 7,107-island archipelago can be counted among Asia's most manageable countries for Americans, since better than half of its 44 million citizens speak English. Yet the Philippines are home to nearly a hundred ethnic groups; to exotic rice-paddy villages where the men wear loincloths and carry machetes; and to some of the Far East's loveliest scenery. Special delights: shooting the rapids at Pagsanjan Falls; eating Buko Pie, concocted of the thickened water of young coconuts; hiking through the 2,000-year-old rice paddies into the roadless mountains outside Banaue. The months from March to June tend to be hotter than usual in this basically tropical country, and the period from June to November is the rainy season. Dry days are interspersed with the wet ones, however, and you should be fine providing you come equipped with lightweight rain gear.

Events: *Carabao Festival:* Beribboned water buffalos parade around Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, and Rizal. May 6. *River Festival:* The narrow local canoes are decked out with flags for processions down the Apalit River (to the music of the latest American hit tunes). June.

Information: Contact the Philippine Tourist Office, 556 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10036 (212-575-7915).

SINGAPORE

No longer the somewhat raffish place of Somerset Maugham's day, this is a bustling, almost Western metropolis. Yet it's still definitely Asian.

Outdoor markets like the one that sprouts nightly on Bugis Street show off a side of Singapore as unsterilized and unhomogenized as ever. Singapore's shops display pewter, batik, carvings, paintings, silk, and carpets from all over the continent. And the stalls at the open-air food markets offer the savory best of culinary China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, and India. Temperatures hover between 80° and 85°F the year round.

Event: *Dragon Boat Festival:* As in Hong Kong and Taiwan, competitions involving these long, sleek boats are popular occasions. June 7.

Guidebooks: *The Apa Guide to Singa-*

ON TOUR IN THE THIRD WORLD



Considering the rigors of traveling here and the difficulties of planning ahead, package tours take on additional appeal—especially the ones led by botanists, biologists, and others who can provide education as well as entertainment. Look into the programs of these firms: *Adventure Associates*, 5925 Maple St., Ste. 116, Dallas, TX 75235 (800-527-2500 or 214-357-6187); *Hanns Ebensten Travel*, 705 Washington St., New York, NY 10014 (212-691-7429); *Mountain Travel*, 1398 Solano Ave., Albany, CA 94706 (415-527-8100); *Nature Expeditions International*, 599 College Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306 (415-494-6572); *Pan Angling Travel Service*, 180 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60601 (312-263-0328; for fishing trips worldwide); *Questers Tours & Travel*, 257 Park Ave. S., New York, NY 10010 (212-673-3120); *Sobek Worldwide Wilderness Expeditions and Tours*, PO Box 761, Angels Camp, CA 95222 (209-736-2661; 800-344-3284); *Wilderness Travel*, 1760 Solano Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707 (415-524-5111).

more, edited by Hans Hoefler and Star Black (about \$14.50; Apa Productions, Singapore).

Information: Contact the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board, 342 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10017 (212-687-3855).

SRI LANKA

Suspended from the tip of India like a pearl from a courtesan's ear, this medium-sized island nation has rice paddies and mountains carpeted with tea bushes; spoiled white beaches that go on for miles, and dense jungles where you can watch monkeys playing Peter Pan in the trees and elephants gobbling leafy bushes; huge, ancient ruined cities as impressive as any in Asia, and hill towns where the hotels are so full of chintz and ripe white linen that the British Empire seems to have vanished only yesterday. The ruins at Polonnaruwa, with their ast reclining Buddha, Anuradhapura's tree (said to have grown from a branch of the one under which Buddha obtained enlightenment), and the tawny-colored cave paintings high above Sigiriya, are almost as spectacular as the beaches.

Except in the mountains, where temperatures occasionally drop to the fifties, Sri Lanka weather is hot and humid the year around; the southwest monsoon keeps the west coast too wet for enjoyment from May to August.

Events: *Esala Perahera*: Spectacular torchlight processions of caparisoned elephants, a thousand frenzied drummers, s many wildly ritualistic dancers, and en times that many spectators. May. *Vesak Day*: Especially colorful in largely Buddhist Sri Lanka, and particularly at Anuradhapura, where tens of thousands of white-clad pilgrims come to worship at the temple around the sacred tree. May. *Kataragama Festival*: Tranced worshippers walk on fire. July or August.

Guidebooks: *Nagel's Ceylon* (\$30; Hippocrene); *Tony Wheeler's Sri Lanka: A Travel Survival Kit* (\$4.95; Hippocrene).

Information: Contact the Ceylon (Sri Lanka) Tourist Board, 609 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10017 (212-935-0369).

TAIWAN

Don't overlook Taiwan just because the mainland is now accessible. The stupendous collection of Chinese treasures on display at the National Palace Museum still ranks among the world's best. The theater of the stomach, as enjoyed in hundreds of restaurants specializing in all varieties of Chinese regional cuisine, is terrific. Yehliu National Park has its

phantasmagoric coastal rock formations, and the 120-mile-long East-West Highway, completed just over 20 years ago, is amazing, as it traverses that lovely forest and mountain scenery and 2,000-foot-high, marble-walled Taroko Gorge.

Best of all, such appealing sights can be found within a relatively manageable area, which independently minded travelers can explore on their own.

The period from February to April is especially pretty, as cherry trees and azaleas blossom in Taipei's Yangmingshan Park; the humidity and temperatures are somewhat lower than during the summer months, from May to October. But even at that time, lightweight clothing should see you through.

Event: *Birthday of Confucius*: Memorial services, held at dawn in Confucian temples all over the island, attract big crowds, September 28.

Information: Contact the Taiwan Visitors Association, 1 World Trade Center, Ste. 36155, New York, NY 10048 (212-466-0691).

THAILAND

Unlike some Asian cities, Bangkok enjoys no respite from its tropical heat and humidity; no matter when you travel, you'll encounter temperatures in the eighties and humidity of about eighty percent the year around.

It's not hard to understand the attraction Thai feel for beach resorts such as Pattaya and Bangsae, both busy and festive on weekends, and, to the south, the still fairly peaceful island of Phuket, one of the loveliest beach resorts on the Indian Ocean.

Too many foreigners' visits omit such destinations, as well as spots like the ruins of Ayutthaya, the nation's capital from 1350 to 1767; the yet-more-beautiful ruins of Sukhothai, Siam's seat of government for about a hundred years, beginning with its founding in the mid-thirteenth century; or to nearby Chiang Mai, the city-cum-crafts-center, whose scenery, climate, and beautiful women have earned it the sobriquet "The Rose of the North."

The rainy season runs from May, June, or July into the fall.

Event: *Rocket Festival*: Accompanied by much native music and dancing, rockets are launched in villages all over the northeastern province, Yasothan, as a plea to the gods for rain. May 7 and 8.

Guidebook: *The Apa Photo Guide to Thailand* (about \$14.50; Apa Productions, Singapore).

Information: Contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand, 5 World Trade Center, Ste. 2449, New York, NY 10049 (212-432-0433).



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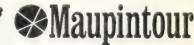
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(Continued from page 40)

about the law, reaction was strong. There was a near unanimous outcry from the universities, teacher organizations, and the Arkansas Academy of Sciences. Editorial scorn was heaped on the perpetrators by virtually every newspaper in the state. So far have we come since 1928 that editorialists in places like Warren, McGehee, Stuttgart, Searcy, and Lonoke felt free to denounce Act 590 without having to fear for burning crosses. The prevailing theme was that the thoughtless bozos of the legislature had again made Arkansas a national joke, just when its image had begun to improve after the damage done by Orval Faubus in the 1957 Central High integration crisis. A Little Rock man had lapel pins made with a banana logo and sold them to benefit the monkey house at the zoo; he raised hundreds of dollars. A series of derisively funny editorial cartoons has appeared in the *Arkansas Gazette* in which Governor White always appears holding a half-eaten banana. Only the *Arkansas Democrat*, the capital's second-string newspaper, involved in a circulation war with the *Gazette* and seeking the lowest common denominator, has defended the law.

SENATOR HOLSTED was prevented from reaping what glory there was to be had from creationism by an untimely indictment for embezzling \$105,000 from the family business, but Frank White has got himself an issue. The governor's genius consists of a total inability to be embarrassed. His 1980 campaign was a masterpiece of fraudulent innuendo. Besides the usual denunciations of taxes, Big Government, and welfare cheats—Arkansas has the lowest taxes of any of the fifty states, and thus of the industrial world—White spent most of his money on a series of television commercials showing a minor riot by Cuban refugees housed on a former Army base near Fort Smith. Most of the Cubans were black. Had Governor Bill Clinton "stood up" to Jimmy Carter, he asserted, this threat to Arkansas's peace and security could have been prevented.

Whether or not White is the crassest religious hypocrite seen in these parts since Billy Sunday seems to me a question not worth pausing over. Americans overrate sincerity. Morally speaking, it matters little whether a person can't think, won't think, or merely feigns the credulity of a child. In any case, creationism has become so volatile an issue that the governor is welcome to it, should he decide to flog it in the 1982 campaign. Creationism cuts unpredictably across party and ideological lines. As always, the imponderable mystery is how the monkey law plays in the country; White couldn't be elected county assessor in Little Rock. But there are no polls to tell us how many Arkansans favor the law, much less whether its proponents care deeply enough to vote on that basis alone. Many legislators got nervous when they began hearing from their educated

constituents, particularly from ministers and churchgoers from nonfundamentalist sects, which have long since given up militant opposition to the visible world, and who believe correctly that antics like those of last year degrade religion rather than advance it. Chambers of commerce anxious to lure new industries, especially of the clean, high-tech variety, found themselves facing embarrassing questions. Some even wondered whether creationism might not hamper the Arkansas Razorback football and basketball coaches in their quest for out-of-state talent. If *that* could be proved, only Jehovah himself could save White from popular wrath. Many legislators said they thought they had made a mistake; there was talk of repeal. But that required the cooperation of the governor, and White stood petulantly firm. If anybody was going to save Arkansas's public school students from necromancy, it would have to be a federal judge. Again.

God takes the stand

IF ONE wished to understand why the adult forms of Christianity in America seem afflicted with polite senility while the kindergarten churches bulge with sinners, Little Rock's creationism trial offered many clues. When the American Civil Liberties Union first announced that it would challenge the law and presented its twenty-three plaintiffs to the public, creationism looked to be set up

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for a quick knockout. Of the twenty-three, twelve were clerics. Their number included not only the Methodist, Roman Catholic, Episcopal, and African Methodist Episcopal bishops of Arkansas but also representatives of the Presbyterians, Southern Baptists, and Reform Jews as well. Here was a perfect opportunity to seize the high rhetorical ground from the electronic fundamentalists. In aligning themselves with an easily exposed religious hoax, the Moral Majority and company would seem finally to have gone too far. To require that a sectarian dogma inimical to most churches be taught as science in public schools violates virtually everything sixth graders are taught about Americanism.

But the churchmen blew it, locally at least. They allowed themselves to be muzzled by a platoon of lawyers. Perhaps "muzzled" is a bit strong. Although the trial was political in its essence, the ACLU conducted it as if it were a corporate merger. In their own pulpits and newsletters, the clergy expressed themselves forcefully and with some eloquence. Bishop Hicks of the Arkansas Methodist Church delivered himself early on of a well-written letter to the *Gazette* on the vast presumption underlying fundamentalist bibliolatry: that puny man sets himself up to limit God's power to the dimensions of his own mind. But only a small fraction of readers see the editorial page; Hicks was preaching to the converted. If the churchmen had appeared on the evening news bearing such messages, if they had held regular news conferences and distributed press releases at regular intervals commenting on the trial, if they had put together a paid religious telecast on the subject using some of the very erudite and committed scientists and theologians who came to Little Rock on their own time to testify, they might have dealt creationism a crippling blow. They did not conduct such a campaign. But the Moral Majority and the Institute for Creation Research did. So the fundamentalist line that the trial was a contest between atheism and the Lord went unchallenged, at least in volume and stridency.

The court would never criticize or discredit any person's testimony based on his or her religious beliefs. While anybody is free to approach a scientific inquiry in any fashion he chooses, he cannot properly describe the methodology used as scientific if he starts with a conclusion and refuses to change it, regardless of the evidence developed during the course of the investigation.

—Judge William R. Overton

BUT THAT is a cavil next to the brilliant show the ACLU's witnesses made during the trial last December. Arkansans can thank their governor and legislature for provoking a first-rate seminar on science and theology, featuring an array of erudite men and women whose like we would not otherwise have seen in five years of visit-

ing lecturers. University of Chicago theologian Langdon Gilkey made such a forceful witness that he had the fundamentalist preachers who crowded the back of the courtroom nodding and buzzing in agreement when he dissected the language of Act 590 to reveal at every turn the unacknowledged authority of Genesis, the very phrase "sudden creation of the universe, energy, and life from nothing" implying not only God, but the God of the Old Testament alone.

Of course most of those preachers are simple souls, not up to the rapid donning and doffing of hats required to maintain that creationism is "scientific" and Act 590's purpose is secular. Unlike many of the state's witnesses, they have never wandered in the wood of materialism and doubt. Evolution is to them an unholy fairy tale whose premises they have never credited for one moment. As for the U.S. Constitution, why, if the Founding Fathers had meant for us to separate God's word from our government, the word "Creator" would not appear in the Declaration of Independence. Only communists think otherwise. When Cornell sociologist Dorothy Nelkin said in cross-examination that she was an atheist, there was a muted gasp in the back of the courtroom. Several heads bowed in prayer.

As the plaintiff's witnesses went on, the courtroom took on most of the aspects not of a religious, but an academic, camp meeting. Except for Moral Majoritarians and creationists taking notes, most of the militant godly among the spectators disappeared, to be replaced by honors biology classes from the local high schools and professors from the Little Rock campuses of the University of Arkansas. Even had I not recognized many of the latter, style would have told: in our corner of the world, as the British reporters on hand rapidly established, creationists go in for synthetic fabrics, styled hair, or toupees, while evolutionists sport khaki, wool, and facial hair.

As an academic camp meeting, the first week of the trial was most inspiring to this apostate English professor. Having years ago wearied of the posturings of most academic literary types, I suppose I had grown more than half dubious that useful thinking was going on anywhere in the academic world. But to hear philosopher of science Michael Ruse of the University of Guelph explain how science both limits and lays claim to knowledge, and to be able to listen to such literate practitioners as geneticist Francisco Ayala of the University of California, biophysicist Harold Morowitz of Yale, Harvard's versatile paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould, and Brent Dalrymple of the U.S. Geological Survey was a rare privilege. There may be something more to our species after all than the lust for power and things. Thank you, Governor White.

It was hard not to pity Attorney General Steve Clark and his outgunned staff, attempting to show that the creationism law had no religious origins. The record contained letters from the law's author. "I view this whole battle as one between God and anti-God

forces," Paul Ellwanger had written. He advised his supporters to conceal their sacred motives, lest the courts catch on; if they could not forbear witnessing for the Lord when petitioning their representatives, they should reserve the apologetics for a separate sheet of paper.

The text of the law itself betrayed its intent at every turn. Here, for example, is the definition of the law of creationism:

"Creation-science" means the scientific evidences for creation and inferences from those scientific evidences. Creation-science includes the scientific evidences and related inferences that indicate: (1) Sudden creation of the universe, energy, and life from nothing; (2) The insufficiency of mutation and natural selection in bringing about development of all living kinds from a single organism; (3) Changes only within fixed limits of originally created kinds of plants and animals; (4) Separate ancestry for man and apes; (5) Explanation of the earth's geology by catastrophism, including the occurrence of a worldwide flood; and (6) A relatively recent inception of the earth and living kinds.

In nearly two weeks of testimony, no scientist, whether "creation" or otherwise, could enlighten the court as to the exact meaning of "kind." Creationist Wayne A. Farir of King's College, Briarcliff Manor, N.Y., said it could mean "species," "genus," "family," or even "order," in which case number four above stands contradicted, since Adam and Eve, Governor White, and Bonzo the Chimp all belong to the order of primates. Farir, who labors at refuting Darwin by comparing the blood-cell sizes of various turtles, said he was still working on the problem of whether or not the shelled beasts constitute a kind. Neither turtles nor tortoises, of course, are specifically mentioned in Genesis 1: 11-12 and 21-25, where the concept of "kinds" originates; some, indeed, are "swimming creatures, with which the waters abound," others "animals that crawl on the earth." It is a difficult problem.

PERHAPS no more difficult, though, than the attorney general faced in seeking expert witnesses for creationism. Everybody, both in the movement and outside it, cites Henry Morris and Duane Gish of the Institute for Creation Research as not simply the authorities on the subject, but in fact its originators. Both, unfortunately, are prolific authors. Putting them on the stand to prove creationism to be science would be like calling Richard Nixon to testify that politicians never lie. In his treatise *Scientific Creationism*, for example, Morris says:

- A. Creation cannot be proved
1. Creation . . . is inaccessible to the scientific method.
2. It is impossible to devise a scientific experiment to describe the creation process, or

even to ascertain whether such a process can take place. The creator does not create at the whim of a scientist.

The learned Dr. Gish—he has a Ph.D. in biochemistry from Berkeley—is similarly honest, at least part of the time. In *Evolution? The Fossils Say No!*, he puts it this way:

We do not know how the Creator created, what processes He used, for He used processes which are not now operating anywhere in the natural universe [his emphasis]. This is why we refer to creation as special creation. We cannot discover by scientific investigations anything about the creative processes used by the Creator.

As an article of faith, of course, Gish's is a perfectly sound position and places creationism exactly where it belongs: outside science's claim to know. In a recent letter to *Discover* magazine, though, Gish went further. He was responding to an article attacking creationism's pretensions:

Stephen Jay Gould states that creationists claim creation is a scientific theory. This is a false accusation. Creationists have repeatedly stated that neither creation nor evolution is a scientific theory (and each is equally religious).

Yet this same eminence was everywhere in Little Rock during the trial, sitting two rows behind the state's lawyers, passing them notes, indulging in heated colloquies during recesses, and making pronouncements about the indubitable scientific merits of creationism for the television reporters. Indeed, the man's creator seems to have blessed him with a tropism for bright lights and camera lenses.

Despite a definitely simian aspect, which made him the butt of many cruel jokes in the press row, Gish is in fact a masterful artist of the televised debate, that bastard form of showmanship first visited on us by presidential politics. During the trial, good old Jerry Falwell, of Moral Majority and "Old Time Gospel Hour" fame, staged just such a confrontation between Gish and Prof. Russell Doolittle, a chemist from the University of California, who was naïve enough to think that the winners and losers of such events are determined by evidence and logic. Perhaps in graduate seminars and laboratories they are, but for all of his earnest learning, Doolittle might as well have been trading insults with Johnny Carson. Gish's presentation was timed to the minute and consisted of a premium assortment of half-truths, semifacts, quasi-logic, outright falsehoods, and simple balderdash. All replete, of course, with scriptural authority. In front of the audience in Falwell's Lynchburg church, cheering and whistling to see the infidel routed, Gish was triumphant.

Gish argued, for example, that the Second Law of Thermodynamics renders evolution impossible. How childish of "evolution scientists" to imagine, he implied, that they could push this ludicrous hoax

past such a learned and reverent authority as himself. What the cheering faithful do not know, however, is that the Second Law of Thermodynamics states almost the opposite of what Gish says it does. In a closed system, it is true, greater organization of heat energy cannot occur. A closed system is one that energy is not entering from the outside. In an open system, into which energy does flow, increased organization of energy can and does occur. Until very recently, when scientists simply ignored the creationists, Gish and his followers did not trouble to make the distinction, although if the Second Law meant what they said it did, not only evolution but life itself would be impossible. On the "Old Time Gospel Hour" debate Gish even slipped for a brief moment into the Old Time Second Law of Thermodynamics, telling the audience that "on the hypothetical primordial earth, you did not have an energy conversion machine." This is heresy.

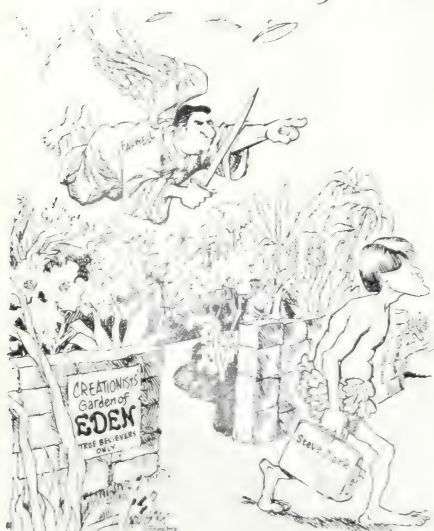
With creationism's chief apologists eliminated as potential witnesses by reason of their own past words, Attorney General Clark had no recourse but to call creationists who had published little or nothing. What began in the first week as a fine seminar degenerated into a boring farce with overtones of pathos. That the state's case was incoherent was no fault of the lawyers: it was Act 590 that bequeathed to them the "two-model approach," in turn taken from creationist authors, who in turn plagiarized the notion, as I have suggested earlier, from the "equal time" doctrine that allots television coverage to po-

litical candidates in our imperfect world of Republicans and Democrats. Briefly stated, the argument runs like this: "evolution science" posits atheism. "Creation science," while not religious, of course, posits theism. There are no other possibilities. Either there is a God, in which case "evolution science" is falsified, or there is not, in which case... But let us not get into that thicket. Suffice it to say, though, that the theory of evolution does not posit atheism. Science agrees to exclude the supernatural, yes. But so do accounting, law, and the rules of baseball. Are we now to have Bowie Kuhn denounced as a godless purveyor of materialistic satanism? Perhaps a creation baseball league will be next.

THE "TWO-MODEL approach" allowed Clark to pretend what creationists pretend: that all evidence against any aspect of any scientific theory tending to support evolution constitutes proof of creationism. Logically, of course, this is like saying that evidence I was not in Little Rock last Wednesday establishes that I was in fact golfing on Mars. Hence scientists were easily convicted of doing science. Does Stephen Jay Gould's theory of "punctuated equilibrium"—i.e., of evolutionary change in relatively rapid bursts, with cataclysms altering the environment—disagree with those of more orthodox theorists who think the process has been more gradual? Very well. Both are refuted and creationism proved. One of the funnier moments in the trial's first week came when one young barrister tried to ensnare the wickedly articulate Francisco Ayala, a former priest with scientific training and the equivalent of a doctorate in theology, into admitting the validity of the two-model approach. "Your name," the scientist told the expectant young lawyer, "is Mr. Williams. But my name isn't not-Mr. Williams. The courtroom is full of people whose name isn't not-Mr. Williams." The real Mr. Williams changed his line of questioning. At another point, a state's attorney asked Professor Morowitz of Yale: "Can you tell me the name of one Ivy League university that has a creation scientist on its staff?" Morowitz could not. Neither could he name any other prestigious graduate school or journal that employed creationists. Morowitz added, "I can't give you the name of an Ivy League school, graduate school or journal which houses a flat earth theorist either."

The state's most coherent witness by far was Dr. Norman Geisler of the Dallas Theological Seminary. It was Geisler who admitted, under cross-examination, that besides the two-model theory, he also believed that UFOs were "a satanic manifestation in the world for the purpose of deception." As nearly as I can work it out, Geisler believes that any abstract idea held strongly by any number of people constitutes what he calls "transcendence," and answers his definition of religion. He quoted, as all good fundamentalists do, from something called *The*

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Humanist Manifesto, and intimated that because there is such an organization, and because a footnote in a Supreme Court decision once classified that organization as a religious one, that all persons who are "humanists" are acolytes of that faith. I shall refrain from insulting *Harper's* readers by letting them work out the syllogism themselves. It is by such arguments that fundamentalist "intellectuals" propose to render the First Amendment tautological and thus useless: if all intellectual positions are equally "religious" in nature, then why bother?

The most profound part of Geisler's testimony was his attempt to prove that the "Creator" of the universe and life mentioned in Act 590 was not an inherently religious concept. After citing Aristotle, Plato, and one or two other classical philosophers who supposedly believed in a God or gods without worshipping them—albeit not as creators of the world "from nothing"—Geisler offered his most thundering proof: the Epistle of James. He cited a line of Scripture to the effect that Satan acknowledges God, but chooses not to worship Him. "The Devil," he said, "believes that there is a God." Whee! If Geisler has not yet squared the circle in his meditations, he has at least, well, circled it. Who would have thought one could prove the Creator a nonreligious idea by means of hearsay evidence from Beelzebub? After unloading that bombshell, Geisler, too, hastened to face the cameras in the courtroom hallway. "We don't rule out stones from a geology class just because some people have worshiped stones, and we don't rule God out of science class because some believe in him." As I listened to Geisler I could not help but recall the words of the Rev. C. O. Magee, a Presbyterian minister who is a member of the Little Rock School Board. "Any time religion gets involved in science," Magee told the *Gazette*, "religion comes off looking like a bunch of nerds. . . . The Book of Genesis told who created the world and why it was created and science tells how it was done." Amen.

AFTER GEISLER, the state's case went straight downhill. These witnesses were supposedly learned men, possessing advanced degrees, most of them resident in institutions that purported to be colleges and universities. Some of my own prejudices against academia would have revived, except that this collection of sad sacks, flub-a-dubs, and third-rate hobbyists had been gleaned mostly from the kinds of schools where the faculty must sign pledges certifying their literal belief in the factual inerrancy of the Bible, and were not, in the post-Enlightenment sense, really academic institutions at all. (The Institute for Creation Research requires such a pledge.) Most were like Donald Chittick, a physical chemist from George Fox College in Newberg, Oregon. Chittick spent hours telling the court how fuel could actually be made very rapidly

from "biomass" materials. (In the Ozarks, of course, a good deal of biomass fuel has been distilled and drunk over the years.) To Chittick's mind, this proves that the world does not have to be 4.5 billion years old at all. Chittick's most telling point was that the amount of helium present in the earth's atmosphere indicates that radioactive decay has been taking place on earth for about 10,000 years only. That is just about how old creationists say the earth is. Either Chittick did not mention, or does not know, that helium is too light to be held by earth's gravity and disperses constantly into space.

The trial's only poignant moment came during cross-examination of Harold Coffin, a dreadfully earnest Seventh Day Adventist who spends his time floating horsetail ferns in tanks of water to demonstrate that their fossilized ancestors found standing upright in coal seams hundreds of feet thick could have floated to that position during Noah's flood. Coffin was asked to say how old the earth would seem to a person unaided by Scripture, and considering only the available scientific evidence. Coffin paused for what seemed five minutes before answering, so it must have been at least fifteen seconds. As old as evolutionists claim, he said, about 4.5 billion years.

To his credit, Judge Overton kept his patience throughout, although he did seem to be losing it once with a pompous faculty lounge-lizard type from Wofford College in South Carolina, one W. Scott Morrow, a chemist who claimed to be an "evolutionist," but took it upon himself to testify to the closed-mindedness of "my fellow evolutionists." After more than an hour's worth of plausible generalities about how scientists are slow to accept new ideas, Overton asked Morrow if scientific papers were ever rightly rejected. He said he couldn't answer, as he'd never been an editor. Pressed by Overton for one specific example of a scientifically valid creationist paper's having been rejected, Morrow could not provide one. (Indeed, in the course of the trial the state could not produce a single creationist paper that had been published in a refereed scientific journal anywhere in the world, nor even one that had been submitted.) "Are you saying," the judge challenged, "that the entire national and international scientific community is engaged in a conspiracy?" Morrow replied that he knew a lot of his colleagues in science and "I know a closed mind when I see one." Afterward Morrow, too, hustled in the direction of the cameras, and told the press that the judge wasn't paying attention and was obviously biased. Then he beat it back to South Carolina, which is welcome to him. Have I mentioned that there was only one Arkansan among the creationist witnesses?

The pro-creationist witness who traveled farthest for the trial, however, was one Dr. Chandra Wickramasinghe, a native of Sri Lanka who teaches mathematics in Wales. Having allied himself several years ago with Sir Fred Hoyle, the notable English as-

tronomer, who seems to have slipped into scientific dotage, Wickramasinghe has collaborated with his mentor on two books that have done very well on best-seller lists in England, *Life Cloud and Diseases from Space*. The first book is an elaboration of a science-fiction novel by Hoyle which I read about twenty-five years ago. It posits that life originated in swirling clouds of intergalactic dust and was brought to earth by a comet. So far the hypothesis has not been falsified, but at the moment it cannot be seriously tested either.

Diseases from Space elaborates on the idea that viral epidemics are in fact visited on us from the great beyond and asserts that viruses cannot be transmitted horizontally from one human being to another. This hypothesis provoked the best joke of the trial. If viruses cannot be transmitted from one person to another, some unknown wag on the ACLU side wondered, then how about the following scenario: a man comes home and tells his wife, "Honey, I've got good news and bad news. The bad news is I've caught herpes. The good news is it came from outer space." As for the creationist notion that the universe is just 10,000 years old, Dr. Wickramasinghe said, "one would have to be crazy to believe that."

A blow for theocracies

WE ARE ALL the poorer for Attorney General Clark's decision not to appeal Judge Overton's ruling that the creationism law is unconstitutional. No rationally consequent adult who sat through Little Rock's creationism trial can have expected another outcome. Even the Moral Majority's fulminations were clearly a reaction to the dismal showing the creationist witnesses made. Examined in the light of reason, with evidence honestly given and logically assessed, creationism cannot prevail. Unlike a televised debate or a local school-board committee meeting, the trial was a fair fight. But nothing said that Overton's opinion—and I hope readers will have patience with my pointing out that he was educated at Malvern (Ark.) High School and the University of Arkansas—would be as cogent and well written as it was. Many of the creationist faithful were privately contacting the attorney general's office here to advise against appeal. They would like to believe they have a better chance in Louisiana, where the local authorities have deputized the Institute for Creation Research's Wendell Bird. Overton dismissed Bird's argument as having no legal merit:

If creation science is, in fact, science and not religion, as the defendants claim, it is difficult to see how the teaching of such a science could "neutralize" the religious nature of evolution.

Assuming for the purposes of argument, however, that evolution is a religion or religious tenet,

the remedy is to stop the teaching of evolution, not establish another religion in opposition to it. Yet it is clearly established in the case law, and perhaps also in common sense, that evolution is not a religion and that teaching evolution does not violate the establishment clause.

It is equally clear that the state has a "compelling interest" in the teaching not only of biological science, of which the theory of evolution is the fundamental organizing principle, but also of chemistry, physics, geology, and even history, all subjects that would have required "balancing" with creationist gibberish if Act 590 had stood. Where that is the case, the Supreme Court has ruled many times, aggrieved fundamentalists who do not wish to have their children hear what offends them, and wish the shelter of the "free exercise" clause of the First Amendment, are permitted to withdraw their children from science classes or from public school.

Ultimately, the creationists cannot prevail in the courts. Now that the scientific community and the educated public are aroused by the Little Rock spectacle, I doubt that a bill in the U.S. Congress of Rep. William Dannemeyer's (Rep.-Calif.), which would limit funding for the Smithsonian Institution if it refuses to put up creationist exhibits, will get anywhere either. So long as current attempts to limit the power of the federal judiciary are fought back—Arkansas's Act 590 controversy being a textbook example of the political cowardice that has led to courts currently having more power than most of us are comfortable with—we will not have a theocracy in this country, fundamentalist or otherwise. Leave it up to the Arkansas legislature, and in five years we would have an Inquisition.

Creationism was mortally damaged by the Little Rock spectacle. That is why the slippery Dr. Duane Gish now says he thinks state laws mandating its teaching are a mistake; he wants to go back to strong-arming local school boards, as in the past. In fact, the Moral Majority and its politico-religious allies, I believe, will soon be muttering only to each other again. One could not observe the Arkansas Moral Majority head, Rev. Roy McLaughlin, in action in his modernistic pulpit in Vilonia without speculating that his boyish charm—he looks like a sort of cross between Pat Boone and Howdy Doody—might just be wearing a mite thin. Arkansans may be hotter than most citizens for that old-time fundamental religion, but are they really ready to credit McLaughlin when he says, with unmistakable reference to the clergymen on the opposite side of the creationism case, that "a preacher who does not believe the word of God to be the inspired, inerrant, infallible word of God . . . is a crook and he ought to resign his pulpit . . . and quit robbing money from God's people"? Even out on the dirt roads, they know McLaughlin is talking about their friends and neighbors. In the long run, Arkansas folks aren't mean enough for that. □

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HOW CAN YOU DEFEND THOSE PEOPLE?

The clients Louis Nizer never gets.

by James S. Kunen

JUDY HOFFMAN* was a gum-cracking eighteen-year-old in platform shoes, breathtakingly tight jeans, a slinky jersey, and pink sunglasses with a sequinned star on the one lens that was not covered by her cascading brown hair. She would not have been mistaken for a Campfire Girl, but she was well within community standards of dress for criminal court. Charged with "loitering for purposes of prostitution," she was my very first client, when I was a student practitioner at New York University's Criminal Law Clinic.

It seems that on the night in question, after dinner at her cousin Marlene's house, Judy and her boyfriend had driven from their native Brooklyn to the Library disco, at Fifty-eighth Street and Sixth Avenue in Manhattan. Before going off to look for a parking place, her boyfriend dropped her opposite the Library; she intended to buy cigarettes and call her sister. She had completed the first errand, and was standing at a pay phone, digging through her pocketbook for a dime, when a man in a three-piece suit asked her if she knew a woman named Mary. She said no, and was about to drop a dime in the phone, when a man in a green windbreaker came up behind her and told her she was under arrest.

"What do you mean?" she said. "Are you serious?"

He was serious, and told her to hand over her pocketbook. He put her into a car, and sat down beside her. "You're a whore," he said.

"Don't call me that!"

His investigation of the pocketbook led to the discovery of four dollars and change, and a phone book. He looked through the phone book. "There's nothing here," he said. "You got another phone book?" He handed the purse to another plainclothes-

man as they drove to the Eighteenth Precinct. "Here, maybe you can find something." At the station, she was booked, fingerprinted, and locked in a cell to await the arrival of a relative.

It was hard for me to believe that the police [man-is-my-friend] would arrest a young woman for *no reason at all*, but Ms. Hoffman's indignation, coupled with her lack of any prior arrests, persuaded me. Prostitutes bankroll New York City's courts by being arrested and fined, and released to be arrested and fined again and again. Prostitutes without arrest records exist, but not for long—sort of like falling stars.

Ms. Hoffman and I agreed that complete vindication was the only acceptable disposition. We waited, and waited, and waited, until her case was called. Drawing shallow breaths, sweat trickling down my ribs, I accepted the judge's invitation to join the D.A. at the bench for plea bargaining. Oh, my God. I had no idea what to say or do.

"Let's get rid of this," the judge said. "Plead her guilty, and I'll let her go with a fine."

"She's not guilty, Your Honor."

The judge did not appear to hear me. The D.A. rolled his eyes.

"All right," the judge continued. "I'll take a disorderly conduct."

"No, she won't plead to anything," I reiterated.

"C'mon," the judge said. "She has to plead to something—a dis. con., no fine, she can walk out of here right now."

Suddenly I was seized by inspiration. "But Your Honor," I whispered intently, my eyes blazing into his, "She's not a prostitute."

James S. Kunen, author of The Strawberry Statement, is writing a book about his life as a public defender, to be published by Random House.

* All of the cases and incidents described in this article are real. Names have been changed to protect everybody.

"She's not?"

"No, Your Honor, she's not."

"Oh well, in that case she can go. Case dismissed."

I. THE LAWYER-CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

A. The Lawyer and Client Have Only Their Relationship in Common

In the Matter of Eric Robbins

MY LEGAL CAREER'S happy start was ascribable in part to my passion for justice, in part to my gift for the felicitous phrase, and in the remaining ninety-eight parts to luck. I had been able to make reference—"She's not a prostitute"—to the world outside the courtroom, where she either *was* or *was not* a prostitute, depending on what she did for money; as opposed to the world of the courtroom, where she was either *guilty* or *not guilty* of being a prostitute, depending on the evidence that the prosecution would be able to introduce. What I did that first day is known in the trade as "playing up the justice angle." It is a tactic to which I now know one may not often have recourse.

I went on to become a criminal defense attorney with the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, where I worked for two and a half years. What I know now that I didn't know when I represented Ms. Hoffman could fill a law-school textbook, which would be called, in the accepted idiom...

ONE SATURDAY, my wife and I left our house at 3 P.M. We forgot to leave on a radio. When we returned five hours later, all our negotiable instruments were gone—the stereo, the camera, the cassette recorder. Nothing else was disturbed and we were insured, but I felt like looking up "trapguns" in the *Yellow Pages*.

At work, everyone expressed sincere outrage that such a horrible thing had happened to us—"It's the idea of someone *invading your home*"—then went back to work defending alleged burglars, as did I.

Eric Robbins, four feet eight inches, seventy pounds, twelve years old, was a crook. He thought what was bad about wrongdoing was that you got into trouble for it, sometimes, if you got caught.

He did get caught, acting as the lookout for some older boys who snatched a purse. (He said he was "just playing.") And after he was let out to await trial he got caught again, this time helping some older kids pull a daylight burglary. The burglary was successful. But a neighbor had recognized Eric.



Kimble Mead

A Detective Salt had dropped by Eric's house. Eric's aunt had tried to stop him from questioning Eric. She said he would not talk without a lawyer. But when she left the room to call me, Eric's grandmother encouraged him to make a clean breast of it. ("Eric's grandmother gets nervous around police," his aunt explained.)

Eric had given Detective Salt the nicknames of a half-dozen co-perpetrators, and the streets they lived on. Last names aren't used, perhaps as a hedge against inquiries by the authorities, perhaps for other reasons. Now, the detective wanted Eric to come down to the station and point out their houses.

I called Detective Salt and told him that Eric had no information to share, so I would bring him to the station only if he was going to be arrested. The detective had, in fact, just gotten a warrant for Eric.

I drove Eric and his aunt down to the police station, in my new Mustang (later stolen), through searing sun-bleached boulevards that reminded me of Florida, L.A., or Mexico, and reminded Eric of nothing, since they were all he had ever known.

Eric's aunt lectured him as we drove: Eric goes along and helps the big boys; he gets in trouble; they get the money. "They say there were color TVs and all sorts of stereo equipment stolen, and Eric hasn't got a dime to show for it," she said. Eric sat silently in the back seat.

At the police station, as we waited for the detective to see us, Eric sat with his face between his updrawn knees and his hands over his head. Detective Salt, a portly, overweight man with an acne-scarred face and styleless short hair greeted each of us politely. He took me aside and said he would like Eric to give him a written statement to "firm up" what he'd already told him, and to ride around pointing out perpetrators' homes. He hoped to do that right away, while there was still a chance of recovering some of the property. I refused both requests. Salt remained affable. What was it to him? He understood my job, and he brought all the passion to his own that one would expect from someone working on his 18,000th burglary investigation. For my part, as I stood obstructing the search for somebody's property, I felt as though I were preventing the recovery of my own.

Eric pleaded guilty to the burglary, in exchange for the dismissal of the pocketbook snatch, and was on probation, last I heard.

B. The Lawyer Strives to Get the Client What He Wants, Usually *United States of America v. Angell*

MR. JOHNNY ANGELL was a somewhat unsavory character, as was often true of those of my clients who had committed only trivial crimes, or, as in Mr. Angell's case, who had committed no crime at all—although he was charged with robbery. An elderly man had

told a police officer that someone had hit him in the head *from behind*, and stolen a paper bag containing *jewels*. The policeman had driven the complainant around the neighborhood, and the complainant had pointed out Mr. Angell. Although Mr. Angell had no jewels and no bag, he was arrested.

He had lived in gutters, shelters, and mental hospitals for most of his forty years, occasionally joining the work force as a dishwasher during periods of lucidity or self-discipline. He received workmen's compensation checks, and, rather remarkably, he deposited them in a savings account against a truly tortential day.

I cited these "indicia of reliability" at his bail hearing, arguing vehemently that Mr. Angell should be on the street (literally, in his case) while awaiting trial. Judge Ugast, one of the more earnest fellows on the bench, asked me if I wasn't concerned that Mr. Angell, who was both ranting and raving even as we spoke, might harm himself were he at liberty. I suffered one of those inexplicable lapses into guilelessness that beset me from time to time, and replied that it was not my job to worry about that; my job was to get what my client wanted, and my client wanted out. After all, I argued, no one would question my urging the release of an accused murderer, and if a possible murderer, why not a possible suicide?

The little judge flew into one of his daily earnest rages, upbraiding me for being "an idealist" with abstract notions of legal duty and no contact with reality, adding that I typified everything that was wrong with the Public Defender Service. I was pleased to hear all that, because I did not support the position I was espousing, and I shared the judge's preference for doing what you think is right, as opposed to what you are supposed to do—although I know such thinking causes horrendous traffic jams, among other things.

The judge ordered Mr. Angell held at the jail until such time as he posted his two hundred dollars life's savings for bail. As he was being led away, Mr. Angell, to express his displeasure with the court and its functionaries (me), ripped apart his forearms with his fingernails. This earned him a "thirty-day inpatient mental observation." The judge pointed out to the entire courtroom that Mr. Angell's self-destructive behavior had proved just how wrong Mr. Kunen had been. Of course, the judge had his causal chain hopelessly snarled—Mr. Angell had mangled himself *because* the judge detained him. I let it go. It was just one of those days.

There was nothing wrong with Mr. Angell that a little thorazine couldn't control, and after a mere five weeks of incarceration, he was allowed to bail himself out.

One day, as I was walking back to the office from my bank, I was dismayed to see Johnny Angell swinging toward me on crutches.

"What happened to your foot?" I asked, glancing

at the filthy cast on his ankle. He mumbled something about a bus.

"Could you lend me some money, Mr. Kunen?" he whined.

"I can't do that, Mr. Angell. Do you know how many clients I have? If I gave it to you, I'd have to give it to everybody."

"Please, Mr. Kunen. I only have two dollars, and can't go to my cousin in New York, because I have to stay in town until the trial."

Like all conversations with unwashed, urine-soaked people in the hot sun, this one had gone on too long.

"What am I supposed to do, Mr. Kunen?"

"How do I know? Do what you always do. Be poor," I thought. "O.K.," I sighed, and I reached for my wallet. I was damned if I was going to give him a five. I gave him three singles.

He looked at the bills with undisguised disappointment, but he thanked me. He was nothing if not polite.

"Take care of yourself," I said.

The case against Mr. Angell was dropped a month later. The U.S. attorney's office makes a practice of not revealing why a case is dropped. In Mr. Angell's case, it was likely that the complainant could not be found by the government. I know *we* couldn't find him. Mr. Angell was not in a position to recover damages from the government, because he would have been unable to show that the police had acted in "bad faith."

COMMENT: JUSTICE DELAYED IS JUSTICE AS USUAL

IT IS not true that attorneys resort to arcane "technicalities" to thwart justice by endless delay. There's no need to. Often, at 9:30, I would tell the juvenile court that I had to be upstairs in adult court, which was true. At 10:00, I would tell the adult court that I had to be downstairs in juvenile court, which was also true. I could go on like that all day, although a few hours was usually sufficient to get a matter "kicked over" to some future date. It wasn't my fault that the Superior Court of the District of Columbia couldn't organize itself as well as any mom-and-pop bakery—"take a number"—and I didn't see why I should go out of my way to make sure that the ax fell efficiently on my clients.

It is this requirement of presence that forms the hard pit of boredom at the center of the lawyer's profession. Were you not there—at line-ups, at arraignments, at status hearings—all manner of exciting things might happen: bogus identifications, pressured pleas, forced confessions, anything the mind could conjure up to inflict on a reviled and powerless man, which is anything at all. But should you be there, absolutely nothing would happen. If I was there, I didn't have to be there. I always thought there should be a way out of this conundrum, but

the solution must await further advances in robotics. I pin my hopes on Japan, where, incidentally, there are very few lawyers.

Occasionally, I would get an irresistible urge to go to trial, but I knew I was betraying my client by doing so. As time passes, to paraphrase a famous jurist—I could provide the exact citation in a memorandum if I could have ten days, Your Honor—witnesses disappear and memories fade. Also, passions cool, and the defendant gets the opportunity to compile a long record of good citizenship (no arrests) against the day he faces sentencing, should that day ever come. All of this is good for the defendant, if he is out of jail. If he is in jail, delay is helpful to the prosecution, since with every passing month the defendant is likely to become more amenable to pleading guilty. Since every defendant is either in or out, delay is good for at least one side. And it is always good for the judges, who have more cases than it would be humanly possible for them to try, even if they worked more than six hours a day. The majority of my continuances were attributable to the lack of an available judge.

The only party who has no interest in delay is the victim, and he doesn't even have a lawyer.

III. LEGAL ETHICS

THERE IS NO stronger example of the power of an adjective to modify a noun than the use of the word *legal* before the word *ethics*.

The primary requirement of legal ethics is loyalty to the client. This duty gives rise to ethical demands that are practically the inverse of what is commonly understood to be ethical. If the truth is that his client committed the crime, the defense attorney's job is to keep the truth from coming out, or to keep the jury from recognizing it if it does. It is unethical to refrain from doing this.

A. The Learned Hand is Quicker than the Eye: Three Ethical Deceptions *In the Matter of Norman Trumpet*

MY CLIENT, Norman Trumpet, and his correspondent, Steve Thomas, were charged with burglary, grand larceny, and, in case the state couldn't prove the first two, receiving stolen property.

The government case was simple: the police happened on Norman and Steve in an alley, transferring a stereo and TV from a junked car into a white Pontiac. Finding a D.C. driver's license number etched on the TV, in a matter of minutes the police radioed it in, learned the owner's name, called him, and were told that he had not loaned his home-entertainment equipment to anyone, least of all Norman and Steve, whom he didn't even know.

Our star witness, Suzie Bopp, Norman Trumpet's girlfriend—a sweet, pretty girl who was far too good

for him, in my opinion—testified that she was watching TV over at Cheryl Tiger's house when Cheryl's brother, Herbert Tiger, walked in and said, "I just got a bunch of stuff out of a house back there. I got a TV and stereo out in the junked cars. I'm going to go back and get some more stuff. That man don't never be home." At my suggestion, she left out the next thing Herbert said: "I'm going to call Norman Trumpet. Maybe he'll help me drive the stuff to Maryland."

This omission was not only proper, it was mandatory, it seemed to me, as the last sentence was inadmissible hearsay. The preceding statements were also hearsay, but they were admissible under an exception to the hearsay rule: they were "statements against penal interest," that is, statements that could get the speaker in trouble. The theory is that no one is going to say he's guilty of a crime unless it's true. Stealing the stuff was a crime. Telephoning Norman wasn't. Herbert could have said the part about calling Norman for any old reason—maybe he wanted to impress the lovely Suzie with the fact that he was friends with Norman. Who knows? It's unreliable, and it's inadmissible.

Suzie thus pretty well knocked out the charges of burglary and grand larceny, by pinning them on Herbert Tiger, where they belonged. (Herbert had run away when the police came.)

Then there was the question of receiving stolen property, which hinged on whether our clients knew (or should have known) that the property was stolen. We argued that *obviously* Steve and Norman had no idea that the property was stolen. Why else would they have been loading it onto the Pontiac's back seat instead of concealing it in the trunk?

In fact, as I knew, when Norman borrowed his cousin's Pontiac, he was given only the ignition key, not the trunk key. But when all the evidence was in, no mention had been made of that fact. (The respondents did not testify.)

The judge let that alone when he delivered his verdict. (Juveniles do not have the right to a jury trial.) The way he saw it, Norman and Steve had to have known something was up when they came upon a TV and stereo in a junked car in an alley. He convicted them of receiving stolen property.

The judge decided to lock Steve Thomas up until sentencing, because he had another case awaiting trial, and so seemed to pose a threat of running or raising havoc. He then turned his attention to my client. I knew that Norman's D.C. record was just an expired probation for a robbery four years before, but that he was currently on probation in Maryland for carrying a gun. The judge asked, "And what is Mr. Trumpet's record?" I stood quietly for a long two seconds. "Just probation in 1976," the prosecutor said.

"Okay, he can go," the judge said.

In the hallway, Norman, wide-eyed, asked, "How come you didn't tell him about my probation?"

"I figured he didn't ask me," I said.

"And if he did ask you, you would have had to tell him the truth?"

"That's right," I said, "because I knew your record from looking it up. If I knew it only because you told me, I couldn't tell the judge. What you tell me is confidential."

Norman seemed very impressed, as much with my speculative candor as with my actual silence—with my integrity, I guess.

Norman Trumpet failed to appear for his sentencing.

B. In Civil Law Countries, They Don't Put the Defendant Under Oath *United States of America v. Pepperidge*

IN FRANCE and Germany, they figure that a defendant has "a right to tell his story," and they let him go to it.

Billy Pepperidge was charged with grand larceny/receiving stolen property, unauthorized use of a vehicle, and destruction of property. He was arrested as he ran away from the wreck of a stolen Volkswagen Scirocco, following a high-speed chase through downtown Washington. Two unidentified young males escaped.

The police said that Mr. Pepperidge was the driver, but he told me that he was a rear-seat passenger, and knew nothing about the car. He said he wanted to buy drugs, but not on the street. So he told the seller he'd make the transaction in the car. He got in the back seat. The seller and another man, neither of whom he knew, were in the front. They drove around. A police car put its lights on. The driver sped off. He figured the driver was fleeing because of the drugs. When they crashed, he jumped out and ran.

It was a good story. I thought it might be true.

The case was called: "*United States of America versus Billy Pepperidge*." Some match-up! (But wait! Who's his lawyer?)

Sergeant Fox and Sergeant Doan testified that they had clearly seen Mr. Pepperidge driving the car, even though they were chasing it down a midtown street at sixty miles an hour.

"You must have been looking back and forth to avoid pedestrians, weren't you?" I asked the officer who had driven.

"No, I just keep my eyes on the suspect vehicle at all times," he said. "We're trained to do that. If he hits his brake, I hit my brake."

"Suppose a lady with a baby steps into the street just as the stolen car goes by? You're counting on the thief to lead you around her?"

Sergeant Fox said he was absolutely positive Pepperidge was the driver.

"How long have you been on the police force?"

"Twelve years."

"How many identifications have you made?"

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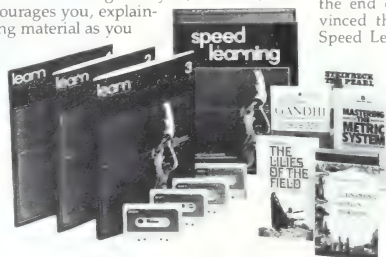
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"Thousands."

"Have you ever made a mistaken identification?"

"Never."

Never! Sergeant Doan answered with the same magic word.

The defense case was to begin with the defendant's younger brother, a clean-cut young high school student, who would supply an alibi for Mr. Pepperidge for the whole day on which the car was stolen (a week before the crash), rebutting at least the grand larceny charge. They'd watched a lot of TV together, listened to a certain amount of radio, and then seen *Up in Smoke*, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *Deathforce*, and *Silver Streak* at an all-night movie theater. "We were crackin' jokes and havin' fun. There was nothin' else to do," he'd told me.

Ten minutes before he was to take the stand, the younger brother informed me that he was not going to testify.

"Are you serious? Why not?"

"I'm afraid they'll recognize me."

"Who'll recognize you? From where?"

There was a long silence. "The police. From the car. I was in the car with Billy."

Oh my God. It was bad enough that I'd just lost my alibi witness, but what about the defendant? He was going to testify that he didn't know the other two people in the car. "Think on your feet, not with them," I always say, but this time I made an exception. I ran to the first respected attorney I could find.

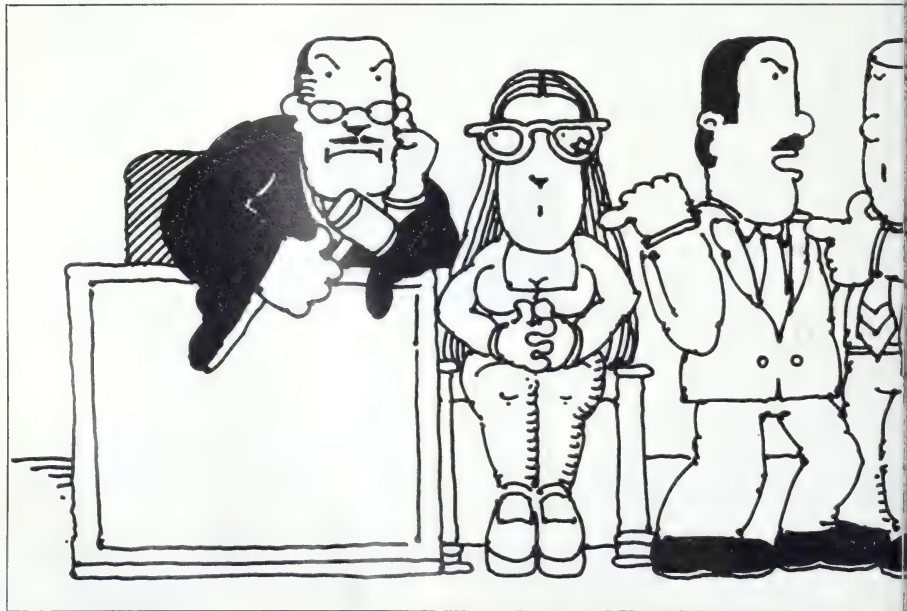
"How can I put on testimony that I really *know* isn't true?" I asked him.

"You don't know it isn't true," he said. "All you know is that your client told you one thing, and another person told you something else."

Billy Pepperidge took the stand. On the day of the crash he had gone to the unemployment agency. As a matter of fact, one of the papers recovered from the car by the police was a certificate, stamped and dated, entitling anyone who would hire him to a tax break. He identified, one by one, the other papers the police had recovered: a diploma from a course in cardiopulmonary resuscitation; a certificate for seventy hours' study of blueprint drawing certificates for advanced graphic design, offset duplication, bookbinding, and photography—all of them earned while he was in prison for interstate transport of a stolen vehicle. Then there was the "help wanted cook" ad, and his last pay stub as a hotel janitor before he was laid off.

Here was a young man who really wanted to make good. He looked good, also. He should have. He was wearing my clothes. A secondary benefit of this sartorial strategy was that when I looked at my client, I saw myself. I believed in him.

He deserved a lot of the credit for our good relationship. Some people are skillful clients. They know how to get the most out of their lawyers. Most defendants know enough to be polite to their attorney—murder is easy to forgive, but rudeness I will not



abide—and to praise their expertise, and never to treat them like friends, replicating as nearly as possible that paradigm of professional relationships to which all lawyers aspire: that of doctor and patient. But the really smart clients know that the key is to act as though they *trust* their lawyer. That triggers a feeling of responsibility in him. Mr. Pepperidge had from the beginning shown a lot of faith in me. Accordingly, in addition to my usual reason for wanting to win—which was *to win*—I also wanted to vindicate his trust in me.

Billy shared with the jury his terrible drug problem, and admitted that he got into that stranger's car to buy BAM (phenmetrazine). Yes, the keys were in the car—there was nothing to suggest it was stolen. No, he had never been in it before.

In summation, I suggested to the jury that a trial is very much like a radio—a similarity that had never struck me before. "You've got to tune it in. Don't listen to the static. Listen to the music." Just about everything the government had put on was static. The music was that "the Perfect Sergeant Fox and the Infallible Sergeant Doan" had made a mistake. Simple as that. They thought Billy was the driver, but somebody else was the driver—a case of mistaken identification. "Haven't you ever been walking down the street, and you see somebody you know, and you're about to call out to him, when you realize that you almost made a fool of yourself—it isn't who you thought it was? That happens to

everybody—except the Perfect Sergeant Fox and the Infallible Sergeant Doan."

The jury deliberated for less than an hour, and returned verdicts of Not Guilty on all counts.

C. Prompting

The Code of Professional Responsibility

THIS PROHIBITS a lawyer from participating in the creation of false evidence. Clearly, this would preclude making up a good story and suggesting that a witness tell it. Prompting and rehearsing witnesses, on the other hand, is not only proper, but absolutely essential to effective representation, as is explaining to the defendant the legal import of certain facts. For example, if a defendant charged with burglary is asked by his lawyer simply, "What happened?" he is likely to omit the fact that he was drunk, since getting drunk is widely thought to be "bad." But if the lawyer says, "Burglary carries a sentence of up to thirty years. Unlawful entry carries a sentence of no more than six months. It's burglary if you go into the house *with the intent* to commit a crime inside. So, if you were too drunk to be intending anything, it's unlawful entry. Now, what happened?" The client is likely to tell the truth about his drinking. Moreover, the client is now marginally closer to standing on the same footing as a John Mitchell or a Maurice Stans facing criminal charges.



Similarly, once apprised of the requirements for the admissibility of evidence, police officers are able to remember, with stunning consistency, that narcotics were "dropped" on the street, and that pistols were lying "in plain view" on automobile seats.

The line between creating evidence and refreshing recollection is a fine one.

In the Matter of Roberto Lewis

Roberto Lewis was a sixteen-year-old sociopath—good artist, flat affect, habitual criminal, no remorse—charged with unauthorized use of a vehicle and carrying a pistol without a license.

The night before his trial, I sat down with Roberto and reviewed his story with him. I read to him what he had told me originally: that some friends of his had honked and offered a ride; he got in the front seat; his three friends were in back; the driver was a stranger, who could have owned the car, for all Roberto knew. When a police car began to chase them, a boy in the back seat threw a pistol into the front. It bounced off the dash and landed on the transmission hump, and the driver shoved it under the seat—under Roberto. He had noticed nothing suspicious about the car; the ignition had not been "popped"; the key was in it.

I then asked him the questions designed to elicit that story at the trial.

Roberto was a quick study. He remembered to include the important points—about the key and the unknown driver. But we ran into a problem about the gun.

"Okay. The police were chasing you. Then what happened?"

He looked away and smiled, as though embarrassed.

"You know—about the gun," I prompted. "When I ask, 'And then what happened?' that's when you tell about the guy in the back seat tossing the gun in front."

"I can't say that," Roberto said, shaking his head and smiling his sheepish smile.

"Why not?"

"The dude would kill me. He's always got a gun. I can't say he's got a gun."

"I see. That is a problem." I paused for a second, not so much thinking as letting something well up in me. "Well, you know, Roberto, when I talked to you the first time, and you told me about the gun, you'd just been arrested; you'd been up all night; you were in the lock-up; you were probably tired and confused. Maybe you weren't thinking clearly? Maybe you remembered wrong? Maybe if you think about it now, you'll remember that you never knew anything about the gun? Maybe you don't know whose it was? Maybe you don't know where it came from? Maybe the first time you saw it was when the police took it from under the seat?"

Roberto closed his eyes, put his hand to his forehead, and thought for a moment. "Yeah, that's right,"

he said.

"What? What's right? You tell me."

"I don't know anything about the gun."

"Fine," I said.

Roberto testified flawlessly. The government didn't prove to my satisfaction that Roberto knew that the car was stolen, or that the gun was in it. The judge, however, perhaps relying on some sixth sense, found him guilty of both charges. Roberto was sent to an institution called the "Children's Center." He escaped, and soon thereafter I had the opportunity to represent him on a murder charge—he shot someone with a pistol in the course of a robbery. He pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and got fifteen years.

IV. COMMENT: PLEA BARGAINING

About 51 percent of felony cases handled by the Public Defender Service in fiscal 1980 were disposed of by guilty pleas.

There isn't time to try everybody, and there isn't room to lock everybody up forever. (On any given day, there are more than half a million people under lock and key in America's criminal justice system—the world's third highest per capita rate, after the Soviet Union and the Union of South Africa.) Therefore the prosecution wants to bargain.

The defense wants to bargain to make the best of a bad situation: it's likely to lose at trial, so it will surrender early if in return the prosecution will reduce the charges. There is also the hope—increasingly futile as pleas become the norm and therefore worthy of less special consideration—that the judge will go easy at sentencing. "He pled, Your Honor," suggests that the defendant is repentant, on the road to rehabilitation; it means that he has saved the court a lot of work.

No decent defense attorney would ever urge an innocent person to plead guilty. Most innocent people simply will not plead guilty, anyway. The same is true of many guilty people. Since I couldn't be sure with which category of person I was dealing, I would in every case ultimately give the same advice: "It's your ass."

V. YOU NEVER KNOW, YOU MIGHT WIN *United States of America v. Winn*

DON WINN, an endearing, happy-go-lucky fellow from Panama, was accused of possession of marijuana. He had been in the process of selling some sort of greenish herbal substance to a couple of men when something about them—perhaps the simultaneous chewing of gum and smoking of cigarettes—tipped him off, and he threw the herb into the air and ran away, spontaneously declaring, "I was selling to get milk for my baby," which, like everything else he said—this was one of Don's endearing qualities—was true. After a bit of a struggle, the undercover cops picked up him

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and the herb, which tested positive as marijuana. It was a locked case for the government, and at my suggestion Don, who had no record, agreed to plead—until the moment his name was called to stand up and do so. At that instant, he decided to go to trial.

I beat a hasty retreat with Don to the hallway.

"Why don't you want to plead guilty?" I demanded, with unconcealed chagrin.

"I don't *feel* guilty," he said. (He was confusing moral guilt with legal guilt.) "Some men drink too much. Some men gamble. Some men run around with women. I don't do none of that. I smoke a little herb. There's nothing wrong with that."

"Fine. Do you have any suggestion for a defense?"

"I didn't *possess* the herb. The herb was on the ground."

"Where you threw it. We're going to have to do better than that, Don... I've got it! We'll say it wasn't marijuana."

Now I had an idea how to proceed. I took an extremely innocent-looking investigator out to a sidewalk one night, and had her play the role of Don Winn. She took a nickel bag of oregano, and threw it through the air, as I took photos with an electronic flash. As I had hoped, the photos showed that falling vegetable matter flutters down over a wide area—"like stardust," she would testify, poetically. Ergo, it is impossible to pick up from the ground in a homogeneous clump, but must be scraped up, necessarily along with other substances, hopelessly compromising any subsequent lab test designed to detect marijuana. The photos would also show that the defense was a class operation.

At the trial, a policeman testified that Mr. Winn was not successfully wrestled to the ground until a third tackle.

"While you were struggling with him, you must have taken your eyes off the greenish herb on the ground?" I asked, intending to argue that the cop had picked up somebody else's greenish herb.

"No, I kept my eye on it at all times," he said. I shared a moment of head-shaking with the jury.

I questioned the lab chemist at length and in great detail, primarily to show the jury that I had worked hard and deserved to win, but incidentally to establish an element of our "argument." He proudly agreed that his tests were so sensitive that they could detect one millionth of an ounce of THC (or "tetrahydrocannabinol," as I impressively referred to it), triggering a positive reaction. Where in the District of Columbia can you scrape the sidewalk and *not* come up with one millionth of an ounce of THC?

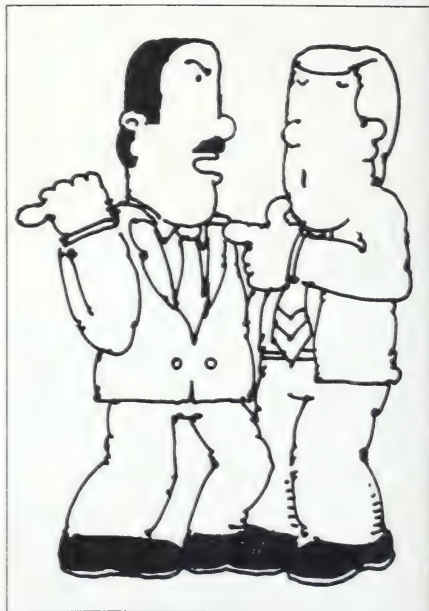
Mr. Winn, of course, did not testify. I told him he was an honest man, and this nifnaf charge wasn't worth lying about. Anyway, lying wouldn't work.

When our investigator took the stand, I walked up to her, waved our 11" by 14" color glossies at the jury, and said, "Without showing them to the jury [they had not been admitted in evidence], I show you these pictures and ask you if you recog-

nize them." Judge Smith and the prosecutor were onto me like wildcats. They demanded to know just what the pictures depicted. I said they were a true and accurate representation of a scientific test, but the judge didn't agree. He said it might have been windier on the night of the experiment than on the night of the arrest. I showed him the weather pages from the newspaper for each of the two nights—wind was not a factor. "That's the wind at National Airport," he said. What a stickler! He said oregano might not fall the same way as marijuana. "What marijuana?" I said. There was no pleasing him. He wouldn't let the investigator testify about the experiment, and he wouldn't let the jurors examine the pictures. (They were visibly disappointed.) He did let us introduce a picture of the sidewalk, which showed that its surface tended to collect dirt. You can never have too many photographs.

In summation, all the prosecutor had was a lot of facts.

I had the high-handedness of the government. "Mr. Winn's future depended on the outcome of that lab test," I said, "and the stuff they were testing had been *lying on the ground*. Suppose you have some disease that could ruin *your* whole future, and the doctors don't know what it is. So they call for a blood test. A lab technician is carrying the test tube with your blood in it, and, whoops! he drops it on the floor. And he says, 'That's cool. No problem. I'll just swab it off the floor and test it anyway.



Good enough for government work.' But is it good enough for you? Is it good enough for Mr. Winn?" "Not guilty," the jurors said.

VI. HOW CAN YOU DEFEND THOSE PEOPLE?

United States of America v. Buie

At 7 P.M. on July 14, 1980, two black men boarded a Metrobus at Thirteenth Street, N.W., heading east on U. They were arguing. As they sat down in the rear of the bus, one said to the other, "I'm going to shoot you, nigger!" and did, with a .38, in the face. He jumped off the bus at Eleventh Street and ran away. The police arrived within minutes, talked to witnesses from the bus, and broadcast the following description of the gunman: "Black male, 5'7", slim, twenty-one to twenty-two years old, white T-shirt, black Levi's."

Twenty minutes later, three blocks away, William Buie was picked up by a police officer and brought back to the bus. There, he was positively identified by three witnesses, and arrested.

I was assigned to defend Buie against the charge of second-degree murder. He insisted he knew nothing about the crime. He got off a bus headed west on U Street at Eleventh Street, at 6:55 P.M., walked home, washed up, and was walking toward his girlfriend's house when the police officer accosted him. Employed full time as a tree-trimmer, with no criminal record, he was released on his personal recognizance, and was able to help me find his alibi witnesses.

Buie's alibi involved eleven different witnesses, far more than could be expected to lie for him. Moreover, what they had to say made him sound like Beaver Cleaver. After he got off his bus, he walked home, pausing to shoot a few hoops with some kids, toss a couple of horseshoes with some others, wave hello to an elderly neighbor on her porch, and shoot the breeze with a fellow who was working on a car. A neighbor saw him as she came out of her house, and she knew it was 7:05—she had just looked at her clock, because she was late for cheerleading practice. The only problem with the alibi was that it could all be true, and Buie still could have done the shooting.

We showed the prosecutor a lie-detector test that Buie had passed. (The test would not be admissible at trial.) We explained that our investigators had shown Buie's picture to the deceased man's friends and family—none recognized him. Buie had never lived near, worked with, or gone to school with the deceased. We were trying to prove that Buie hadn't known the deceased—but how do you prove a negative?

I asked the prosecutor what Buie's motive was supposed to be.

"We're working on that," he said. "We have an idea, a belief." He would not drop the case.

I asked Buie for a list of possible character witnesses. He had a long one, replete with employers, ministers, and schoolteachers.

"Fortunately, you've led a good life," I pontificated. I found myself doing that occasionally—it comes from sitting behind a desk in a chair that tips back. "This is why it pays to live a good life. You find yourself in trouble, you have all these good people to come forward and say, 'He's a good person.' If you hadn't lived right, you couldn't say, 'Hold it. I want to go back and do it right.' You have to do it right the first time."

"That's right," he agreed, smiling self-consciously.

"Character is fate," I said. "The truth will out."

One hoped so. Witnesses were going to say, "That's him," and Buie would probably be eligible for parole in fifteen years.

A few weeks before the trial, it came to our attention that a certain defendant was trying to work a deal for himself by snitching on other people, and one person he was ready to inform on was a man who had bragged to him about shooting someone on a bus. This had, of course, not come to the attention of our prosecutor, because, in criminal court, the thumb doesn't know what the index finger is doing. The snitch, unfortunately, was not going to give up his information without a deal, and while negotiations dragged on, Buie's trial date drew near.

My boss, Gary Kohlman, using an information network he had developed over the years, was miraculously able to come up with the name of the man who had bragged about shooting someone on a bus. He thought it would be a good idea for us to go out and confront the man—a certain "B. J."—who was a former client of his. We found him at his home. He warily acknowledged that he had been in town on the night in question. He purported not to recognize the name of the deceased. We didn't ask if he shot him.

I noticed that B. J. matched the description of the gunman, as did Buie, yet he and Buie resembled each other only slightly.

We showed B. J.'s picture to the deceased's associates, and they did recognize him. We took our new information to the prosecutor.

The government closed a deal with the snitch, who named B. J. and told the police where to find a pistol which ballistics tests showed to be the murder weapon. The police found the pistol's owner, who said that he had loaned it to B. J.

The case against Buie was dropped.

Detectives were still looking for B. J. when he was fatally shot by a policeman in an unrelated incident.

When my boss had first asked me if I wanted to join him in confronting B. J., I said, "I'd like to, for my own interest, but maybe my own interest is not a relevant factor."

"Well, the main point of all this is to amuse ourselves, after all," he said. □



The Miracle of The Birds

A story.

by Jorge Amado

THE MIRACLE occurred on a lively market day in Piranhas, a town on the São Francisco River in the state of Alagoas, Brazil. It was witnessed by hundreds of townspeople, running the social gamut from a rich colonel named Jarde Ramalho, who had seen action against Lampião, the Bandit of the Backlands, to dirt farmers in town for the day to sell their manioc flour and fresh-picked corn. An illustrious visitor who was being fêted that day in Piranhas, the widow of our great regional novelist Graciliano Ramos, saw it too; and since Dona Heloisa Ramos is notoriously truthful, her testimony alone should be enough to prove the veracity of my tale.

The protagonist in this affair was Ubaldo Capadócio, known far and wide for his competence in the three trades of lover, minstrel, and composer of popular ballads, which were printed up in leaflets and pinned to a clothesline, to be sold in the marketplace. His antagonist was Captain Lindolfo Ezequiel, whose reputation for primitive courage and cruelty was a byword in the state of Alagoas, where men are undeniably men. Exactly what kind of captain he was is unclear, but everyone knew he had earned his stripes by dispatching other men to the graveyard. The two occupations for which he was famous were those of hired killer, which paid well and

earned him respect, and husband to Sabô—a position requiring uncommon ability, energy, and constant violent threats to the masculine population. For Sabô, if truth be told, respected neither her husband's military rank nor his ugly scowl and the lethal weapon he wore. Sabô flaunted herself in front of all the men and figured in the dreams of every last one of them (including boys under fourteen) whether single, married, engaged, or living with another woman. But the only person brave enough to risk arousing the captain's murderous masculine pride and an unceremonious death from the barrel of a gun was Sabô herself. All the men who were hot for her ground their teeth, tucked their tails between their legs, and turned their eyes away from Sabô the siren.

All but Ubaldo Capadócio. Not because he was reckless or brave as a lion, but out of sheer ignorance of local custom. After all, he was only a stranger passing through in search of readers and a bustling marketplace where he could sell the ballads he had composed (the latest of which, "The Story of the Society Lady Who Fell in Love With Werewolf," was selling like hotcakes, and deserved to); a party where he could play his concertina and improvise verses; and an inviting bed where he could rest from his labors and snuggle up to a pretty brunette. Whatever his motive, the fact is that he did brave the bully, and what's more he did it in a woman's shortie nightgown; the top of Sabô's pink baby doll pajamas, to be exact.

Jorge Amado lives in Salvador Bahia, Brazil. His most recent novel, Tietê, was published by Knopf in 1979. This story is translated from the Portuguese by Barbara Merello.

UBALDO CAPADÓCIO the minstrel was a heart-breaker and a fine figure of a man: tall, lean, and nimble, with a tousled mop of hair and an easy laugh. A gifted conversationalist in any company, he knew how to season his talk with wit and learning; wherever he found himself an animated circle formed instantly around him. All through the vast back country of Bahia and Sergipe where he worked, worried, and loved, Ubaldo was loved in return and his talents were always in demand. He was showered with invitations to entertain christenings, weddings, and wakes; he had no qual when it came to toasting a bride and bride-room, or telling stories at a wake that could make a dead man laugh or cry. And that's no idle expression. It really happened and I could round up plenty of live witnesses to prove it. I'll mention just two of them here: master artist Calasans Neto and Florisaldo Matos, the troubadour of Sergipe. They both saw the deceased Aristóbulo Negritude burst out in horse laugh, right where he lay dead as a doornail in his coffin, when Ubaldo Capadócio told the story of the beached whale in Maragogipe. I won't ask my friend Carybé the painter to testify because everybody knows he's a liar. The way he tells it, Negritude didn't just laugh, he added a dirty twist to the story as well. But those of us in the know say it as Carybé—no upstanding citizen—who put in the nutty details himself. Aristóbulo may have been a now-it-all but he drew the line at butting in on another man's story; he knew how a proper corpse ought to behave.

It was at shindigs that Ubaldo really shone. Contrabandina clasped to his breast, husky voice soaked in sin, languorous imploring eyes, fingers sliding sensuously over the keys, with his playing he charmed girls and promises from young girls, married women, kept women, fallen women, disconsolate widows. Consoling widows came naturally to a generous nature like Ubaldo's. Along with the deep sighs and ardent promises there was usually a barrage of threats and curses, but Ubaldo was no coward and he plowed right ahead.

Wanderer though he was, he had a house and home—several houses and homes—in Bahia and Sergipe. Why not, with his good looks and his reputation? So many women and Ubaldo was true to all of them, for his was a faithful, constant heart. He never broke off with a woman (except for Bráulio, but Bráulio, for heaven's sake . . .), never sent her away. They left of their own accord, loudly claiming they had been used and betrayed, when they found out about all the others—though how constance could be expected of a romantic wandering bard away from home for weeks and months at a time I don't know. These abrupt partings were never Capadócio's idea and they always made him unhappy. Whenever a woman left him he felt as if he were losing the only one in the world. However many others there might be, each one was the only

one, and if that riddle baffles you then you don't know much about love. What could be the cause of such repeated ingratitude, such unreasoning selfishness, when he, Ubaldo Capadócio, could always be counted on as a breadwinner, a prop, and a mainstay to his women, with more than enough skill and imagination to satisfy them all and to spare?

Some women, in fact, didn't abandon him but took him the way he was. Which explains why, at the time of the miracle in Piranhas, Ubaldo Capadócio, at thirty-two years of age, was maintaining three families on his earnings as a popular poet, balladeer, and musician. What with his concertina and his guitar, his husky voice and his rhymes—rich rhymes or poor, it didn't matter—it was poetry that put food on the table for his three wives, none of them lawfully wedded, and nine children, three of whom were not his.

Two of the households were traditionally constituted families complete with wife and children, while the third had not yet produced any offspring. For Roseleer, the new addition, who was still in the honeymoon stage, it was too early for pregnancy and birth; Ubaldo spent more on the rings, bracelets, necklaces, and other baubles she loved than on either of the other two; in return Roseleer gave him passionate tenderness, a mixture of honey and pepper.

UBALDO CAPADÓCIO, then, was running over with rhymes and with children, only half a dozen of whom, as we've said, were his by blood: three with Romilda, three with Valdelice. Of the three adopted boys, the eldest came with Romilda when this handsome mulatto woman decided to leave her husband behind his counter in Aracaju and follow the plangent chords of the lonely troubadour's guitar. Yes, lonely and forlorn, because when a man wants a certain woman—when he's so hungry for her he can't get her out of his mind—even if he's playing around with other women day and night he might as well be alone; that one confounded woman is the only companion who can cheer him up and cure him of his lonesome blues. Seeing him brought so low, Romilda softened and bundled up her things, but first she told him she was willing to leave her husband but not her little boy; that she couldn't be separated from him. "He'll be my son," swore Capadócio dramatically with his hand on his heart. He didn't care whether she brought along one child, three children, or four; it was all

the same to him, he was so crazy to get Romilda into bed, touch her breasts, stroke her thighs. "Bring your little boy, bring your nephew, bring your whole family if you want to!"

The second boy, named Dante after the poet, was adopted by Capadócio and Valdelice after his mother died, leaving the six-month-old baby with a fierce case of dysentery. Entrusting him to his father was out of the question. Bernardo Sabença, a talented storyteller and improviser who could drink his bar companions under the table, had no aptitude whatever for child-rearing, especially when the child had loose bowels and stank.

As for the third boy, nicknamed Cavy because he shared that rodent's voracious appetite, they knew nothing at all about him—parents, age, name—but had simply picked him up by the side of a back-country road eating clay, which isn't nourishing but tastes pretty good. After a close examination of Cavy's features and ways—fair hair, blue eyes, clever hands that were quick to grasp any object within reach—Valdelice, who was something of an amateur psychologist, concluded that his father must have been a lordly landowner, a "doctor," and that he had inherited his dark complexion from his mother.

For those who want more precise information about Capadócio's family life, I'll just add that he sometimes resided with the fair Romilda in Lagarto in the state of Sergipe, while the Valdelice-Capadócio residence was in Baraúnas Alley, Amargosa, Bahia. Love-hungry young Rosecler lives in Bahia too, in a suburb of a big city, Jequiê. Ubaldo Capadócio kissed his three wives with a cheery "So long, see you soon" (no one but a dead man on the way to his funeral ought to say the word "goodbye") and set off to make his fortune in the famous state of Alagoas, where life is cheap but poetry is prized; where a talented minstrel can reap applause, earn good money, and, if he's brave enough, warm the bed of some fine brunettes.

UBALDO's expedition into the rugged Alagoan backlands was going splendidly. At parties, fairs, christenings, even a bishop's pastoral mission to Arapiraca, Ubaldo Capadócio turned up with his concertina, his guitar, and a suitcase full of ballads all ready to hang on the line, raking in a fair harvest of coins and breaking hearts right and left. After some time he reached the São Francisco River and made his way along

its banks until he came to Piranhas. The scene of our story was famous for the beauty of its setting, for its colonial houses, and for having stood fast against Lampião's band years ago, a feat sung in many a ballad of the time. Yet another source of local pride was the fact that the town sheltered within its unbreached stone walls the aforementioned Captain Lindolfo Ezequiel and his legal wife, Sabô, also, aforementioned but clearly deserving more ample reference to her graceful form, her dancing walk, her rear end that was a living legend, the dimples in her cheeks, and the way the hussy bit her lips to make them redder, as if saying, Oh yes, I'd like to, ooh I wish I could, and so on and so forth. Sabô wasn't a woman at all, she was a temptation of the devil turned loose in Piranhas. But what man was reckless enough to give in? Yes, Piranhas was the home of the brave, the dauntless, the bold—Lampião could have borne witness to that. On the other hand, Lindolfo Ezequiel had already dispatched a fair number of his neighbors to the other world, some at the behest of powerful men, in order to make good money for himself and his free-spending wife, and others on his own hook because he mistrusted their intentions toward the virtuous Sabô. In the mine of her just but jealous husband, Sabô was a snow white dove.

Our troubadour, Ubaldo Capadócio, had been in trouble over women more than once. He had jumped out of windows, jumped over fences, jumped over walls, streaked through the bushes, burst into other people's houses yelling for help, and plunged headlong into the Paraguassu River. One time a bullet had dusted his jacket but Xangô, his powerful spirit guide, protected him. Actually, since the would-be avenger was a military man and a sharpshooter, Ubaldo was never in much danger of being hit.

As soon as he got to Piranhas he made for Sabô's bed, which also belonged, by right of lawful marriage lines from priest and judge, to Lindolfo Ezequiel. The captain and his artillery happened to be off on a short business trip to a distant town, where a congressman had a little job for him to do. "Coast is clear," poor little Sabô called softly, so anxious to make the most of her chance. Not that Ubaldo hadn't been given fair warning from a fellow versifier, the owner of the pension where he was staying: "Better stay clear, pal, Lindolfo has more than thirty notches on his gun, not counting the first few before he started hiring himself out as a professional." Ubaldo didn't put much stock in what he heard; he knew what braggarts Alagoans are, and besides, to him women were always worth taking risks for.

He crossed Sabô's threshold at nightfall and was seen. He was still there the next morning when the sun was high in the sky; the affectionate girl couldn't get enough of him and as for the balladeer, when he found a partner worthy of his mettle he liked to show off—not just his fire and potency, but all of his refinements and skill. He was no ignoramus when



came to sex; he had frequented five-star establishments, including one where the madam was French, and had learned everything they had to teach. Ubaldo was one hell of a lover.

NO ONE ever knew why Lindolfo Ezequiel doubled back on his tracks and got back to Piranhas when the weekly market was at its height, just when Ubaldo and Sabô wereing out the last, fond, quintessential farewell, owing time was getting short but drawing it out cause they were weary, lingering tenderly because they already missed each other. And here came theler waving his blunderbuss, puffing and threatening death preceded by castration in the public square. A curious crowd gathered behind him, the biggest ce the Holy Week procession.

When Lindolfo set foot in the doorway Sabô recognized his tread. "That's my husband," she said with a giggle.

Ubaldo reacted instantly, as he always did on these occasions, and glanced swiftly around for something to cover his nakedness. He was no exhibitionist; in public he preferred to be decently dressed. But he could find in his haste was the top half of Sabô's pink baby-doll nightie, which he pulled on over his head. He was so tall the dainty garment didn't even reach his navel. But naked, as slanderers' tongues have it, he was not. He leaped through the window as the cuckold burst into the room, undishing his revolver. Sabô, the chaste wife and innocent victim, accused the balladeer of trying to lince her and rape her. But she had resisted heroically, and now she clamored for vengeance. "Don't worry, baby, I'm gonna tear his balls out and then put him in the head. Don't worry none about your reputation."

The two men pounded through the marketplace,

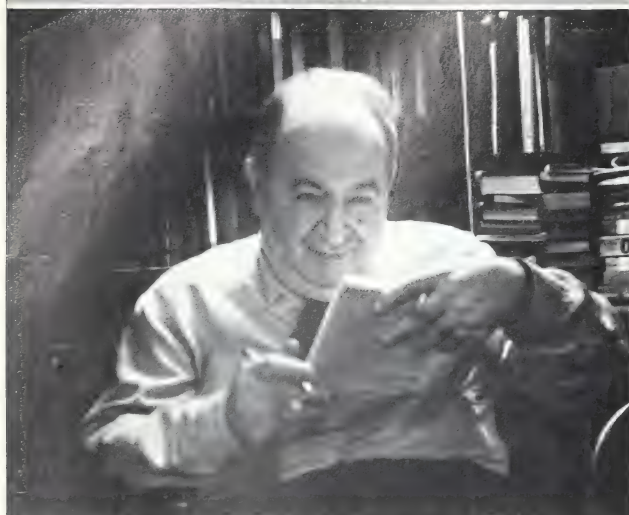
the fleeing minstrel in his shortie nightgown, prick in full view and doomed balls swinging like the clapper of a bell. Hot on his heels and armed to the teeth came the captain with a wicked, sharp pig-gelding knife in his hand. Following close behind them was the eager crowd. Worn out from a night of celebration and a morning spent saying goodbye, Ubaldo Capadocio was losing ground. The killer and his knife were gaining on him and he felt a mortal chill in his balls.

Squarely in the middle of their path was the bird market, a whole pile of wooden cages stacked on top of one other, blocking the way. What with his speed and his fear Ubaldo couldn't veer around them fast enough. He crashed right into the wall of cages and the birds, hundreds of them, fluttered free. One minute the air was full of birds—pigeons and thrushes, orioles and cardinals, canaries and lovebirds—and the next they had picked up Ubaldo Capadocio by his flimsy nightgown and flown away with him. Ahead of them, twelve macaws opened a pathway through the clouds, escorting the troubadour as lightly as a verse wafted by a zephyr.

Lindolfo Ezequiel was rooted to the spot in the middle of the square, where he remains to this day. He turned into a magnificent horntree, the biggest horntree in the Northeast, a unique source of raw material out of which artisans fashion combs, rings, drinking cups, and all kinds of other things. Thus the former killer was transformed into an object of real public utility. As for Sabô, she belongs to the whole community now, under the immediate protection of Colonel Jarde Ramalho, who attentively observed both the chase and the miracle.

The birds flew over Alagoas bearing Ubaldo Capadocio, his balls safely intact, on the breeze. When they had crossed the Sergipe state line they set him down in a convent, where the nuns welcomed him courteously and asked him no questions. □

BOOKS



Contempt Causes Insanity

by Hugh Kenner

The guru of Aesthetic Realism.

ON BEHALF of the poet Eli Siegel (1902–1978), less noted than he might be, VICTIMS OF THE PRESS buttons have been distributed and *The New York Times*, I'm told, has been picketed. (And if you were the *Times*, would you let yourself seem to be pressured? Little word of Siegel, therefore, in the *Times*.) When rumor got out that the present review had been scheduled, someone rang *Harper's* to ask if it would be "fair." I'm sure she was told something tactful.

"Fair" is a word favored by the Aesthetic Realists, a.k.a. the Embattled Disciples of Eli Siegel and, in some of their incarnations, the

Moonies of Poetry. They also favor impersonal constructions, words like "large" and "good," boiler plate like "having-to-do-with." What they push isn't poetry, though poetry is part of it; they push Aesthetic Realism, the banner of a way to psychic wholeness taught by Eli Siegel for forty years. They will testify that he changed their lives, and they cannot get over it. A few months ago some of them rushed a talk show on homosexuality and gave Phil Donahue a hard time. (Are you

Hugh Kenner teaches at Johns Hopkins University. He has recently contributed to A Stirchamber Query, a collection of essays on James Joyce, published by Methuen.

whole and serene if you stay obsessed with your deliverance? Donahue was too flustered to ask.)

I hang in here, not having met a single one of them nor (regrettably) Siegel, two of whose poems I put into a teaching anthology as long ago as 1959. Only now, on the jacket of *Self and World*,* does so much as a photo come to hand. What Nancy Starrels's camera caught seems not a fanatic: a rotund gnome rather, eyebrows arched in delight. He might be the shirtsleeved proprietor of a little business, enchanted to discover the Golden Section curled up like a phantom pussy-cat amid his balance sheets.

As early as age twenty-two, Siegel commanded a gift no less authentic than Emily Dickinson's; as quirky too. It stayed with him till at least middle age.

*A girl, in ancient Greece
Be sure, had no more peace
Than one in Idaho.
To feel and yet to know
Was hard in Athens, too.
I'm sure confusion grew
In Nika's mind as she,
While wanting to be free,
Hoped deeply to adore
Someone; and so no more
Be wretched and alone.*

Fifteen more lines pursue a grave entwining of Greece with Idaho, dark wind with dark wind, girl with girl, to this ending:

*All this in Idaho,
Where grieving girls now go
In mingled love and fear.
The dark that was is here.*

Quintessential Siegel, 1953, and in its rhetoric a fine nineteenth-century poem (observe how line 6 ingratiates with "I'm sure," a phrase no post-modernist would have indulged).

Siegel's prose, come to think of it, rarely mentions anyone later than James or Baudelaire. (His *James and the Children* is the best discussion of "The Turn of the Screw" we have.) He did say that he couldn't see Eliot as a poet, or Marianne Moore, or yet Pound. But if part of him tarried with the shades of Lanier and Whitcomb

* Definition Press, \$17.95.

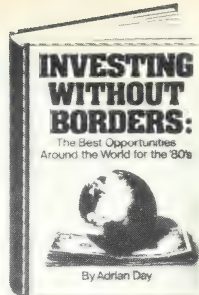
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Riley, another part was heartily attached to Free Verse. No contemporary of William Cullen Bryant's, who drew admonitions from a Waterfowl winging south, would have thought to write that "Worms Go South and They Fit In."

*Worms go south,
And worms go south,
And do they move though.
Worms are like locomotives.
They move, go south, exist: go
south, move, exist, do something.
Worms live and do their stuff,
as something asks, something
makes them.
Worms fit in.
They fit in, and everything is
nice, and that takes in worms.
Everything is nice and that takes
in worms.**

It's as hard to argue with any assertion here as it may be to think all of it worth asserting. When that poem was published in 1927 free verse was still something to grin at. The *Saturday Evening Post* understandably grinned.

BEHIND IT, as behind most of Siegel, and notably the 1924 showpiece "Hot Afternoons Have Been in Montana," a poem as precocious and as final in its way as "Prufrock," careful eyes may discern the Whitman Catalogue-Poem, though with a crucial difference. Whereas Walt declaimed how he encompassed multitudes, Siegel iterates that the space-time world does (also that pussycats do). Whitman's lapses are into windiness, Siegel's into whimsy. Windiness bothers people less because the rhetoric of self has learned more camouflage.

Thus the title, *Self and World*, of a posthumous prose "Explanation of Aesthetic Realism," from which we (and the press) can at last learn what the press has been unfair to. Not that we're allowed to forget the intensity of discipleship that pickets, flaunts buttons, and testifies in

chorus. At the book's threshold you bang your head on an introductory note by Martha Baird Siegel, who says *Self and World* is "the greatest book ever to have been written. If you think I am saying greater than the Bible or Shakespeare—yes, I am." After that, you'll not be blamed for walking warily.

Relax, Siegel fairly purrs explicit good sense. "The aim of mental therapy is to have men like reality." You want to like the world, he says, and like all of it (yes, you do). And you should. Also you want to like yourself, and you should. But an easy way to like yourself is to shut out the world, or parts of it, and cozy up to yourself, the way some people do when they go to bed, others when they just don't want to listen. A good name for this cozying is Contempt, and it can be using up part of a mind that seems otherwise busy and participating.

"Contempt is our soothing revenge for a world not sufficiently interested, as we see it, in what we are hoping for," and it's very fulfilling till you start coming apart; as you will, because your Unconscious won't go on letting you enjoy these little triumphs over the not-you. (Thus if bed has been your haven of contempt, your unconscious may start plaguing you with insomnia.)

"We can't put it together, it is together" (Stewart Brand's epigram, not Siegel's). Our need is to have everything fit into the wholeness that simply is, and from which we emerged: mother and father, yes, also Montana, baskets, Galileo—worms, for that matter: just the way all manner of things coexist in a poem or a symphony.

Hence "Aesthetic Realism," since the mind of the poet, as T. S. Eliot remarked, is always making wholes out of disparate experiences; Eliot's examples were Spinoza, the sound of the typewriter, the smell of cooking. Art shows that minds can unite opposites, so if you're coming apart don't blame unresolvable conflict. Look for Contempt.

It sounds like a string of platitudes? Regrettably. It is what remains after summary has omitted, as it must, the presence of Eli Siegel,

patiently spelling things out. Sentence by sentence he can be sweetly credible, and you'll not miss what he's overlooking till you come up for reflection.

If aesthetics is to be the test, it seems fair to judge aesthetically. More time with the poems may suggest that those girls in Greece and Idaho are wraiths. It's striking that Siegel's verse has hardly any *people*, save caricatures like his LBJ and paper dolls like "Ralph Isham" ("A trim cane he had. . . My, but he was courtly"). The Hildas and Selmas and Teds whose "stories" illustrate *Self and World* are likewise flat, though their costumes are mostly modern. And the poet-therapist, when he took up his pen, displayed no ear for human speech at all ("Why, dear, every young man, no matter how nice, can forget himself now and then"; "In the best Rumanian, Margaret, I'm a heel"). So ring, in his ear, the voices of such folk as he's prescribing for. Who are they?

Abstractions, fabricated humans behind glass. He could slip in and out of unreality without knowing it. The introductory note laments what his isolation may have cost us: "He thought, for example, if he had been able to work with doctors, he could have found the cause of cancer." I'm afraid he did think that.

Yet wisdom glints from his sweet explicitness. "No self can truly know itself and be ashamed." "The fact that we need the world does not mean that we are not free; for where we need something to be free, the need is not disabling." "The neurotic . . . makes a loud outcry over losing something which he does not wish to find."

SIEGEL lectured to most cogent effect on literature. I'd like to have heard him on Kafka whose biography by Ronald Hayman,* the first full-scale one since Max Brod's in 1937, can intersperse the dreary particulars of a dreary life with acute observations:

His writing was the one area in which he could preserve com-

* Oxford University Press, \$19.95.

* Both poems from *Hot Afternoons Have Been in Montana*, Definition Press, 1957; I find less to interest me in his 1968 collection, *Hail, American Development*.

trol, just as a man sitting at an untidy desk in an untidy study can write neatly constructed sentences in neat handwriting laid out neatly on the page. And while disliking himself, he could feel less hostile towards his writing because he generally had the impression of being able to exclude himself from it.

"While disliking himself. . .": Eli Siegel would have pounced on that for ten heady minutes.

Kafka, Hayman tells us, is the Czech for jackdaw. By adopting this name in response to imperial decree, an ancestor about 1788 commenced 'Franz Kafka's . . . identification with insect, ape, dog, rodent': hence Gregor Samsa's huge roach. One thing the emperor would have had in mind was proper surnames to key identity files, and Franz proved an exceptionally zealous employee of the Workers' Accident Insurance Institute for the Kingdom of Bohemia ("combines constant interest in all memoranda with very great zeal," wrote his boss in 1909).

Devoted slave of the system that had required him to be "Jackdaw," he drafted tidy memoranda about a world where "all the beams collapse . . . all the ladders slip, everything they carry up falls down and everything they pass down they fall over," while "the girls in the china factories . . . keep throwing themselves down the stairs with piles of rockery."

That too was work he could exclude himself from. At home he was exacerbated by his own nerves, "tormented by the opening and shutting of doors, the slam of the oven door in the kitchen, the sound of ashes being scraped out of a stove, Valli's shouted enquiry whether Father's hat has been brushed, someone else's attempt . . . to shush her, a shouted riposte, the unlatching of the front door, its slam as Father went out, he singing of the two canaries," until he wanted to "crawl like a snake into the next room, and beg . . . for quiet."

Nerves, illnesses, furtive amours, bizarre dreams, lackluster engagements arranged, prolonged, and broken. Years of pother over daily

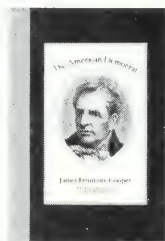
losing what he had no wish to find: a dispiriting life, pointless to read about save that a unique writer lived it. What to make of *that*?

Walter Benjamin called Kafka's stories "parables which interpret a doctrine that does not exist." Hayman's dissent relies on Freud: the stories interpret Kafka's life with his father, an opaque bully cut out to play the heavy in someone's narra-

tive, though rather Hayman's, I'd venture, than Kafka's.

Elsewhere we learn about the Yiddish actors Franz saw in 1911, when he was twenty-eight, and Hayman might have done more with his own remarks on the joy their makeshift theatrics gave, as well as on the catalytic force of the Talmud, which encouraged Kafka to "take ideas literally and then pursue them

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relentlessly." Combine that logic with an endlessness of improvised scenes, and you are close to a generative principle for *The Trial*, which is also the fantasy of an insurance clerk dealing rigorously with his world.

OTHER good books less haunting than *The Trial* have derived from an author's ability to see human action as imperious dealing with the world. For thirty-five years an astute man named E. J. Applewhite has gazed with good-humored inattentiveness at the piled stone of Washington, D.C., a place where people are tempted to make "statements." In *Washington Itself*,* Applewhite has written the first guide not only to the stones but to what the stones say: e.g., "dignity," something Congress instructed the architect to say when it wrote the act authorizing the Supreme Court Building. "The result is a Roman temple whose final effect comes perilously close to being pompous—which is an exaggeration of dignity." Of the pediment motto, EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER LAW, Applewhite notes that "the simple word 'Justice' would have been less complicated."

If such architecture can epitomize Contempt, in Eli Siegel's special sense, it can also be diverting if you stay good-humored. Of the DAR insignia, "a spinning wheel of thirteen spokes crossed by a distaff holding flax in its cleft," our author observes that no wheel with an odd number of spokes would long survive in practical use, and the main entrance hall of the Library of Congress ("nothing less than gorgeous") he happily likens to "the interior of a Baked Alaska with pistachio and gold meringue executed in marble and bronze."

Though no guide could direct your eye more exuberantly (see how "the three indigenous plants most important to the American economy—tobacco, corn and cotton"—are worked into Corinthian capitals near the Old Senate Chamber), *Wash-*

ington Itself is a book to absorb readers with no intention of going near its city. The guidebook format is Applewhite's pretext for crisp meditations about behavior in a focus of power. His concern is for "what goes on inside the building itself: lobbying, policing, giving grants, displaying objects—a setting for work or prayer or homage or escape."

Buildings, Applewhite knows, are always metaphors, to shape a use largely gestural. The only money in the Federal Reserve Building "is at the employee's credit union and petty cash for the cafeteria." For "Economics is a process reinforced by mythology and symbols," and mere coins are tawdry in "the very Valhalla of the dollar," where all that happens is "the invisible function of making policy." The front door, so grand it merits a long sentence, was permanently closed in November 1978 "for budgetary reasons." "You may enter through the back door on C Street, but be prepared to state your business to the security guard."

COMICALLY dead abstraction of that order is one theme for Wendell Berry, who is poet, farmer, sage, in whichever order you like. Berry's foreword to his new book of essays, *The Gift of Good Land*,* states two laws about any system that measures benefits only in money: (1) "A farmer is worth more dead than alive"; (2) "Anything diseased is more profitable than anything that is healthy." (A door closed is cheaper than a door open?)

Ranging from Kentucky to Peru, he describes people whose way of liking the world while liking themselves is to run small farms from which they, yes, feed their families and, yes, stay solvent.

Their effort goes counter to economic law, which calls for the Economy of (large) Scale and the Division of Labor: in a word, agribusiness. But such law pertains solely to money, and does not know how

to measure what is not for sale intangibles, yes, but also whatever simply bypasses the market, "a when meat animals are fed on the farm where the feed is raised, an where the feed is raised to be fed to the animals that are on the farm. Let a banker quantify *that*, or let the Fed.

"The industrial economy," says Mr. Berry, "grows and thrives by lengthening and complicating the essential connection between producer and consumer." Nearer home, it encourages poor work on the farm "because poor work can be easily priced." It lasts only a short time so its whole life is readily summed "Good work, which in fact or influence endures beyond the foresight of economists, can be valued but not priced, because its worth is incalculable. I am talking about the difference, say, between a wire fence and a stone wall, or between an gasoline engine and any good breed of livestock."

Here it is our teachers of poetry who have served us ill. A stone wall we have been taught, is firm, good moral, poetic, but notably hard work, and obsolete. Good words like "stone" have been banished to "poetic" obsolescence. Wendell Berry would have us reflect that a wire fence must soon be replaced by another wire fence . . . on and on, to the great profit of the wiremaker Stone, troublesome to lay, is laid for good.

Writing what he knows, he writes prose with the ring of stone. "It is hard to make sense of something you don't enjoy," he concludes a chapter on horses. "Farmers who have a use for horses and use them and enjoy using them are making sense. When going back makes sense you are going ahead."

The style, yes, shows the man Style unites (as Siegel said) opposites: explicitness with speed, concision with clarity, what is held in the hand with a sureness in the great world. Wendell Berry has been called "the closest we have to a modern Thoreau." I'll raise that. He surpasses Thoreau, who wouldn't have known what a tractor was good for (read the book and learn what). □

* Knopf, \$15.50 and \$8.95.

* North Point Press, \$16.50 and \$8.50.



Friends for Now

by Ann Hulbert

Try deepened conversation, Mr. Carnegie.

WHEN the midwestern farm boy Dale Carnegie suddenly emerged as an expert on friendship in 1937, he had had more experience with animals than with people. The preface to his pioneering book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, which has sold millions of copies since its publication in 1937, described young Dale's upbringing on the family farm in Missouri, where he devoted his early mornings to feeding Duroc-Jersey hogs and his evenings to milking cows. His days were spent in the company of his dog, Tippy, and on the back of his horse, which carried him miles to and from the state

teachers' college, where he was not a social success.

This background left its indelicate imprint on his book. Human nature, Carnegie concluded, was animallike—part porcupine, part peacock, to judge by his description. "When dealing with people, let us remember that we are not dealing with creatures of logic," he counseled. "We are dealing with creatures of emotion, creatures bristling with prejudices and motivated by pride and vanity." To such antisocial animals, friendship is utterly unnatural (prickles and plumes get in the way of intimacy), entirely a product of will. Carnegie set out to train his intractable breed, starting with this basic command: "Say to yourself over and over, 'My popularity, my

happiness, and my income depend to no small extent on my skill in dealing with people.'"

Friendship has been an elusive subject throughout history, a frequent theme in imaginative literature but one scarcely explored in nonfiction. Thoreau proclaimed friendship "the secret of the universe," and noted, "I can remember only two or three essays on the subject in literature." For decades, Carnegie's guide to making friends had the "how-to" market pretty much to itself (though it has had challengers in the how-to-influence-people racket for a long time).

Just lately, however, there has been a spate of new books on the art, or science, of making friends. Dorothy Carnegie, Dale's widow, has joined in with a revised "1980's edition" of her husband's classic. It looks like friendship may be the human relationship in vogue this decade. But the 1980s crop of books, however, sees friendship very differently from the Carnegie classic.

While Carnegie portrayed friendship as a practical tool in a society obsessed with upward mobility, the new "experts" present friendship primarily as a source of comfort in a culture preoccupied with personal security and mental stability. (Even Mrs. Carnegie's update amends the stakes in friendship skills from "my popularity, my happiness, and my income" to "my popularity, my happiness, and sense of worth.") The original Carnegie and the modern friendship books confirm that Aristotle's classic definitions of the two common kinds of friendship need no updating: one is based on utility, Carnegie's concern; the other on pleasure, this decade's focus.

Despite their more spiritual aspirations and their endorsement of naturalness and goodwill, the current experts on friendship still advocate studious, self-conscious strategies for forming alliances. Carnegie's ploys for those craving recognition and appreciation have been supplanted by advice for those with a new selfish craving—for self-fulfillment. The contemporary purveyors offer friendships that are hardly less manipulative than Carnegie's,

Ann Hulbert is the associate literary editor of the New Republic.

though they claim moral superiority and higher sensibility. Reading their books, as well as Carnegie's, one might well ask what kind of society requires step-by-step instruction for making friends. What value can friendship have if it is not an intuitive process relatively free from artifice? Perhaps, as historian Christopher Lasch has observed, the public and private realms of contemporary life, our public poses and private selves, have become so indistinguishable that sincerity and intimacy cannot readily be found in either.

THE Carnegie method for making friends amounts to animal-training tactics.* Carnegie tells of being trained by his dog, Tippy, who taught him the basic manipulative technique of dispensing appreciation:

You never read a book on psychology, Tippy. You didn't need to. You knew by some divine instinct that you can make more friends in two months by becoming genuinely interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.

What's more, "behind this show of affection on his part," Carnegie marvels, "there are no ulterior motives: he doesn't want to sell you any real estate, and he doesn't want to marry you." Humans, however, bereft of the canine instinct for appreciating others and possessed instead by a "craving to be appreciated," need exhaustive drilling in Carnegie's three "Fundamental Techniques." These are: "don't criticize...or complain"; "give honest and sincere appreciation"; and "arouse in the other person an eager want." The result, Carnegie claims, will be appreciation in return, plus real-estate sales, marriage proposals, or satisfaction of whatever other ulterior motive lurks behind the chummy show. Merely smile, make frequent use of the other person's name.

* *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, revised edition, by Dale Carnegie and Dorothy Carnegie, Simon & Schuster, \$12.95.

("the sweetest and most important sound in any language"), and obey those three tips, which multiply in successive chapters into Carnegie's six ways of making people like you, nine ways of changing people, and—count 'em—twelve ways of winning people to your way of thinking. Follow these rules, and you're reborn a hail-fellow-well-met, guaranteed to get ahead.

Carnegie is convinced that sincerity is as easily willed as a ready smile and a memory for names. He's wrong, of course, but in the original edition it doesn't matter most of the time. After all, Carnegie's brand of pseudosincere, hearty friendliness suits the professional life of the salesman whom he had foremost in mind in 1937, and is similarly useful in other lines of work.

But the insincerity that often works in places is rarely appropriate in personal, intimate relations. As an afterthought, in the 1937 edition, Carnegie extended his manipulative techniques to "Rules for Making Your Home Life Happier." The hollow niceties he prescribed for husbands and wives to exchange were creepy. That chapter has been dropped from the revised book (Carnegie's portraits of wives as housebound clothes horses and their husbands as patronizing breadwinners won't do these days).

Instead, the entire 1980s edition offers instruction about intimate friendships as well as casual social and business associations: remember, the new edition is concerned with increasing readers' total "sense of worth," not merely their "income," so Dorothy Carnegie has tinkered with some of the innumerable chatty examples that illustrate the rules. She has duly changed "the other fellow" to "the other person" and set female bank employees side by side with lumber salesmen. (The numerous animal examples conveniently require no such updating.) More significant, she has also eliminated tales about "really big men" and the achievements they have credited to calculated chumminess and replaced them with familial, personal anecdotes—about fathers

coaxing their sons to go to kindergarten and mothers coping with teenage daughters. Rather than lending a cozy and contemporary tone, however, this exercise of Carnegie ploys in private life is only slightly less creepy now than in the original chapter.

STILL, as Mrs. Carnegie chirps in her preface, "the brash, breezy Carnegie style is intact," and *How to Win Friends and Influence People* remains cheerfully and anachronistically uncontaminated by anxiety about crises of culture and self. Mrs. Carnegie is confident that friendship will be a favorite theme in this decade. To judge from the publishers' lists so far, her sense is shared by others more au courant, and anxious, than she. The array of new titles covers most of the conceivable angles on the relationship. *The Challenge of Friendship: Helping Your Child Become a Friend*¹ is complemented by *The Age Factor: Love, Sex and Friendship in Age-Different Relationships*.² *Straight Women, Gay Men*³ has yet to find its companion on the market, but *Friends as Family*⁴ is matched by many books about family as friends (especially mothers and daughters). Two general treatments of the subject stand out: *Friendship: How to Give It, How to Get It*, by Dr. Joel D. Block,⁵ which sold out a hardcover printing after the author appeared on the "Donahue" show; and *The Art of Friendship*, by Christine Leefeldt and Ernest Callenbach.⁶

These books aim to be sensitive and searching, not brash and breezy, and their (meager) substance differs from Carnegie's as well. Empathetic therapists rather than enterprising salesmen, the authors focus on intimate friendships and tune out the public world. Rather than list rules for ways to act sociable in the rat race of work life, as Carnegie did,

¹ By Shirley Gould. Dutton, \$16.95.

² By Jack LaPatra. M. Evans, \$9.95.

³ By John Malone. Dial, \$8.95.

⁴ By Karen Lindsey. Beacon, \$14.50.

⁵ Macmillan, \$10.95; paper, \$4.95.

⁶ Pantheon, \$8.95.

these new books aim to suggest ways to be friendly in leisured private life. "Friendship is an untapped natural resource," Block writes:

Particularly during the difficult times of recent years—high unemployment and inflation, a loss of faith in government and a general disenchantment with traditional values—friends can offer comfort and support; they are the threads keeping us connected to the world.

Californians Callenbach and Leefeldt strike a mellower note, describing friendship as an exciting, enriching, back-to-nature adventure—"a precious and touching human capacity, and doubly valuable in a society which operates as if everything has a price." And they'll show you how to get it for only \$8.95.

Both books would have their readers believe that the self-development craze that has helped cause "our personal, disconnected society" can also promote the friendships that will connect us again. Block and Callenbach and Leefeldt agree that breaking out of stifling stereotypes and loosening commitments—the standard exercises prescribed for discovering and fulfilling that true and total self—will usher in a new age of deeper, more various, more rewarding friendships than our role-bound predecessors ever imagined.

ADVICE about finding, making, and keeping such amorphous friendships is much harder to dispense than were Carnegie's tips about cultivating profitable pals. And compared with the vapid, "supportive" suggestions these authors offer, Carnegie's emphatic rules come to seem refreshing reminders of a more wholesome time, when goals were clearer and simpler. "Deepened conversation," rather than the polished sales pitch, is now the way to win friends. The 1980s experts concur that women, long maligned as competitive cats unfit to be friends, are far better at sharing their thoughts and feelings than men; males, according to the authors' findings, tend to be reticent rivals, not noble com-

rades as myth has it. But what both books in fact demonstrate on page after page is that no one is any good at this "empathetic communication." Carnegie's anecdotes at least had lively characters and plots, even corny jokes; the vacuous examples that fill these two books manage to make friendship sound, above all, boring and embarrassing.

For instance, the authors of *The Art of Friendship* go out of their way to praise men for adopting the "brotherhood handshake." First, they minutely describe this "longer, fuller grasp of each other's hands from an angle that requires standing closer than the traditional handshake does." Then they grandly interpret: "We believe that it symbolizes a broad and deeply felt male need for more intimate and meaningful ways of expressing their feelings and friendship to members of their own sex." Women improve on such silent gropes toward communication with eloquent gestures like this:

May was unable to tell her new friends Brenda and Stan how much their friendship was coming to mean to her. Very late one night she phoned them and said: "Scuse me. I'm down here at the laundromat and really drunk, watching my clothes spin round and round, and I just had to call and tell you what neat people I think you are."

Allegedly "deeply touched," and probably deeply asleep, Brenda and Stan must have missed the pathos of this impromptu tribute. Pathos lurks everywhere in these books, which expose insecure soul after insecure soul failing about for some approximation of friendship.

If the advice Carnegie and his successors offer about how to "win" and "get" their supposedly useful and desirable friendships is inadequate, their tips on how to keep such friends are hopeless. Since our needs and desires are notoriously fickle, friendships based on them are bound to be fickle as well (as Aristotle warned). That is good news, of course, for the how-to-get-friends-and-keep-them literary industry, since it means that books will con-

tinually be bought. (Back when his was the only one, Carnegie frugally urged constant rereadings of his text.) The advice the manuals dispense will never afford lasting relief from loneliness, but it can always bring a glimmer of hope. That's because it presumes that friendship is a matter of conscious, deliberate choice, which means that anyone, guidebook in hand, can learn it—the old-fashioned way, rule by rule, or the newfangled way through deepened communication skills, role-reversal exercises, and other therapeutic games—and be on the way to social success or personal security and happiness.

THESE popular experts are surely right that friendship is more subject to willful choice than the other basic relationships in our lives. After all, we're born, or sexually inclined, or legally compelled into our families, our romantic ties, and our civic roles. Yet, paradoxically, friendship is also more elusive, further from our control, than those other relationships whose contours have been charted by social and psychological conventions. The genesis of friendship is often mysterious (instigated by nothing so unmistakably stirring as sexual attraction, for example), its course follows few formalities (no dates, no betrothals), and its future is always open to question. "My friends have come to me unsought," Emerson marveled. Montaigne remarked on an "inexplicable and fatal power" at work in the best friendships. It is that power—not the conscious, malleable will enshrined by popular psychologists and therapists—that makes possible sincerity rather than insinuation; empathy rather than conviviality; sympathy rather than solicitude; conversation rather than communication; commitment rather than casual association. Thoreau shared this one unteachable secret about friendship. "It is a drama in which the parties have no part to act," he wrote. "They who are Friends do not do what they *think* they must, but what they *must*." □



Washed Up

by Frances Taliaferro

Followers of Robinson Crusoe.

The Mosquito Coast, by Paul Theroux. Houghton Mifflin. 374 pages, \$13.95.

AT TIMES of existential disgust, the soul yearns for what is orderly and proper. This morning's unmade bed and burnt toast are only the homely signs of a larger chaos: the graffiti and the ordure, the scum on the river and the trash on the sidewalk answer to the feckless winds and the slovenly weather. The times are cacophonous. One longs for some wholesome harmony: a tidy garden, a quiet street, shelves of fresh folded linen.

In such a mood, there is a curious pleasure in reading desert-island novels. It's not only the escape to

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another world; that can just as easily be accomplished with a dip into Proust or Lady Murasaki. The trouble is, visiting another literary civilization requires one to master the complexity of its society, learn the etiquette, become a member. And when one is feeling repelled by the perversity of one's own surroundings, something a good deal simpler may be called for.

Robinson Crusoe (1719) is a novel of the most healing simplicity. As often befalls books that are widely known to be classics, it is widely unread: by children, who find it too slow-moving, and by adults, who dismiss it as a children's book. Both miss the point. On the noblest and most adult level, *Robinson Crusoe* concerns the workings of divine Providence to grant salvation, but in the most satisfyingly

childish way it celebrates the pleasures of a secret and exclusive kingdom organized exactly as its ruler wants it.

His survival secure, Crusoe has years in which to gratify his orderly temperament. "I had everything so ready at my hand, that it was a great pleasure to me to see all my goods in such order, and especially to find my stock of all necessities so great." *Robinson Crusoe* has been described as an allegory of economic man; let no reader forget that the first meaning of economy is household management, and Crusoe is the first hero of good housekeeping.

Crusoe muses that "By stating and squaring everything by reason and by making the most rational judgment of things, every man may be in time master of every mechanic art." The world was not created for our comfort, but with a few tools and persistent common sense Crusoe organizes hesitant Nature and gets it working his way. The tidy plantations, the sturdy winter and summer dwellings and the country "bower," the comely storehouses and certain supplies of bread, meat, fruit, and drink all attest with cheerful serenity to Crusoe's good management; his homemade umbrella is the emblem of his ingenious comfort. When at last he returns to "civilization," how anticlimactically scattered and messy it seems.

The Swiss Family Robinson, by Johann R. Wyss and his son Johann D., first published in 1812, reads like a preposterous parody of *Robinson Crusoe*. Crusoe was shipwrecked on a seemingly Caribbean island where goats and parrots provided conservative local color. The Swiss Family, cast away somewhere near Australia, become the masters of an island whose indigenous fauna include flamingoes, lynxes, penguins, buffaloes, kangaroos, monkeys, sturgeon, bears, antelopes, ostriches, walruses, elephants, hippopotami, and angora rabbits. The abundance is almost laughable.

The Swiss Family are not so much managers as consumers. From the wreck they salvage enough of life's amenities to stock an Alpine chalet. The island obligingly offers them

everything they need: delightedly they stumble on flax and vanilla beans, asbestos and turpentine. The father, a pedagogue and a prig, makes no mechanical discoveries in the manner of Crusoe; this improbable householder always "remembers reading somewhere" how to make a felt hat of angora combings or how to trap ortolans. A likely story! Trigger-happy young Fritz, most himself when he is shooting a flamingo or a kangaroo, is eventually rewarded with the discovery of a pearl-rich oyster bed. At their feast of suckling pig, guava fritters, and seaweed jelly, the father gloats that "We might have been banqueting in Zürich." Indeed, this desert island might just as well be one of those ports where shopping for duty-free wonders becomes a sacred obligation and a way of life.

Robinson Crusoe, who has doubts and fears, is a far more endearing character than any member of the smug Swiss Family. Both settlements, however, proceed on the wholesome assumption that it is our God-given business to cultivate our garden; indeed, each tidy kingdom is a kind of paradise whose creator finds it very good. Irony flourishes too. It is hard to read these novels and not question "civilization," for in each one the island, at first a place of durance and exile, becomes a truly civil refuge.

CIVILIZATION is most savagely questioned in Paul Theroux's novel *The Mosquito Coast*. Theroux may or may not have intended any kinship, but inevitably this book will be compared to its desert-island cousins. Unlike them, it is clearly a novel for adults: not a hymn to tidy perfectibility but a tale of apocalypse and godless ruin, a masterly invention on the theme of civilization and its discontents.

Its central figure is rational man gone cranky: an inventor named Allie Fox who lives in Massachusetts and cannot stand "the awfulness of America—how it got turned into a dope-taking, door-locking, ulcerated danger zone of rabid scav-

engers and criminal millionaires and moral sneaks." Whatever happened to the patriot's dream and the Yankee virtues? The degenerate America of Allie's invective is suffering "national brain damage" and chronic gridlock. The fruited plain has been processed into Froot Loops. The shopping malls are full of "fake frontiersmen with their chuck wagons full of Twinkies and Wonderbread and aerosol cheese spread." The airwaves hum with "Nipponese video-crapola."

Allie, the incarnation of Yankee ingenuity, is fond of calling himself "the last man"—the only survivor of an earlier purity. He likes the idea of starting afresh "in an empty place with nothing but his brains and his toolbox." The empty place he chooses, his hopeful alternative to debauched Massachusetts, is a particularly God-forsaken stretch of Honduras: Mosquitia, the Mosquito Coast. There Allie arrives by banana boat with his wife and four children, to put behind him the land of Twinkies and aerosol cheese and be king of his Stone Age country.

It won't be the Stone Age for long, of course. Allie quickly subdues the jungle and establishes a few immediate comforts: plumbing, a mosquito-proof gazebo, a Burpee garden. In no time Jeronimo, the little settlement, is a place of productive order. Allie is contemptuous of people who live "like monkeys," taking what Nature gives them and making no imaginative use of it. "What's a savage?... It's someone who doesn't bother to look around and see that he can change the world."

No wonder he sees his trim little clearing as "a superior civilization," a masterpiece of "appropriate technology."

The children, meanwhile, long for both the lives Allie despises: the Twinkie life, you might call it, and the monkey life. Fed up with their father's tiresome ingenuity, they make their own camp: a secret clearing in the jungle where they can goof off, eat unimaginative bananas and avocados, and play school, church, store, telephone—all the corrupt institutions Allie has

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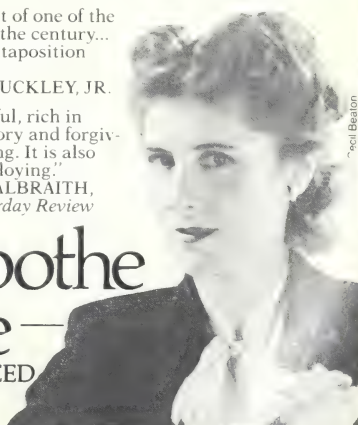
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WILFRID SHEED

DUTTON

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"Cool Beaton"

forbidden. They call their counter-civilization "the Acre."

Allie's constant obsession has been to manufacture ice on the Mosquito Coast. Ice! Ice is "the beginning of perfection in an imperfect world," Allie says. It preserves, it heals, it freshens. "It's free. It's even pretty. It's civilization." "Fat Boy," the enormous cooling plant he builds at Jeronimo, is sensible and miraculous. Fat Boy produces ice in the jungle—not the cubes whose Coca-Cola tinkling Allie disdains but ice in mounds and bergs, ice the emblem of Allie's unconquerable mind, ice that God might have produced for the jungle, too, if He had been a more persistent inventor.

From such thoughts it is only a short step to hubris. Now God becomes Allie's target. He challenges the Creator, the Inventor who "had a great idea in making the world, but He started it and moved on before He got it working properly." Allie will finish the job and transform the jungle with ice. He is as zealous a missionary as any of his enemies, the "goofballs who ooze scripture" in Mosquitia, but alas, his zeal is miscalculated and just a bit corrupt. Allie the creator has set in motion the mechanism of his destruction.

When Fat Boy explodes, poison-

ing the river and reducing Jeronimo to stunning ruin, "the last man" escapes with his family. Of course he sees himself as a new Adam, bent on building another appropriate civilization, but the next settlement is scrawny and unyielding compared with orderly Jeronimo. Trapped in a coastal swamp, the family degenerates into peevishness. The thunder roars and all around them the lagoon comes "creepily alive" as creatures begin to emerge from their eggs: tortoises, iguanas, alligators. It rains with indescribable savagery. Chaos is come again: this is the new Flood in which all the visible world is drowned. His tight little house floating like a barge, an Ark, Allie is a crazed Noah, mad with hatred for the corrupt America whose imagined cataclysm lies downstream.

Mosquitia has become a nightmare coast and there is no asylum upriver; there, at the heart of darkness, the scripture-oozing missionaries are drinking Kool-Aid and watching video cassettes of the Muppets. Nor is there any question of rescue, the eventual option of Robinson Crusoe and the Swiss Family Robinson. Allie's "fragile and temporary civilization" shattered, his harmony gone to cacophony, he is a madman whose death is his last terrible invention.

PAUL THEROUX provokes odd questions about what it is to be civilized. Is orderly management enough? After the chaos and degradation of the horrendous river, Allie's teenage son Charlie dreams of salvation: chocolate fudge cake and cold milk; the clean, well-lighted refrigerator in Massachusetts, with its tidy shelves of cheese, grape jelly, a pie, a pitcher of fresh orange juice. Is man more than this, a poor, bare, forked animal who slides up to his Westinghouse for a healing draught of Tropicana? Allie Fox, cranky, intemperate, even deranged, knew that at the heart of civilization there is more to life than mere good housekeeping.

The Mosquito Coast is a brilliant novel, far funnier, more poetic, and more intricate than this one-sided summary suggests. It is monopolized by Allie Fox, who is one of the most vivid figures of recent fiction, but it also belongs to fourteen-year-old Charlie, and it works well as a novel of father and son. There is great satiric energy in the set pieces that show us migrant workers in Massachusetts, the seedy Honduran port, or the missionaries in their consumer's paradise upriver. And there is, of course, the magnetic pull of Allie's intentions: he is the lone hero, grandly misunderstood, and we're rooting for him.

Among Paul Theroux's works of fiction, the natural partner of *The Mosquito Coast* is *The Family Arsenal* (1976), another disquieting novel of a civilization corrupted. Here the apocalypse is urban and good housekeeping's days are numbered. The family of the title is a makeshift arrangement of terrorists and their groupies, vowed to disorder; the center cannot hold and the Swiss Family Robinson has gone sour.

Those who know Paul Theroux only as a travel writer must read these two novels and acknowledge his power over fiction. He shares with many other contemporary novelists the subject of the unweeded garden possessed by what is rank and gross, but few have realized it with such breadth and brilliance. □

Negligible Literay Anecdote No. 2



Philip Burke

by John Morressy

Byron, the Shelleys, and Dr. Polidori were playing poker one evening in Byron's villa near Geneva. Shelley was losing heavily, and trying to recoup his losses by wild and very obvious bluffing. At one point, holding a pair of threes, he tried to bluff his wife, Mary, who held a full house (aces and queens).

Dr. Polidori threw down his hand (a low straight) and said irritably, "You just can't be realistic, can you, Percy?"

Chastity Returns

by Erich Eichman

Brief reviews.

Founding the Territory, by Laurel Goldman. Knopf, \$13.50.

"We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are." The words are Anaïs Nin's; they stand in front of this novel, Goldman's first, as well they should. The "seeing" here is far from normal, but the pictures it offers up are no less real. That's the point. "Last time we were in here together," the novel begins, Jesús Rivera decided I was Jesse Ames." "Here" is a psychiatric ward, Jesús Rivera an occasional guest; I" is Jay Davidson, a disturbed young man of one reckoning. (Jesse Ames, obviously, by another; it depends on how you look at things.)

Jay is relentlessly watchful, indiscriminately keen: he "spies" on everyone; he *sees* everything. His problem—acute and quintessentially modern—is that he can't make sense of what he sees: he can't find a principle by which to confer meaning, and when that isn't enough to threaten despair, his memory and busy subconscious unloose a few confusing scenes of their own. Someday," Jay thinks, "it will pay off. Everything will fall into its proper place, and I will, at last, understand." It doesn't.

Goldman has not just created another alienated hero. There is pathos in Jay's story and there are many wonderful moments of black humor, especially when Jay moves in the world outside the ward ("Try as hard as you can," goes his doctor's benediction, "and avoid com-

plications"), pulled down by anomie, stirred by a vague idea of love, threatened by overwhelming boredom, and visited at the oddest times by every kind of aberration neurosis can find expression in. He sleeps too much, he eats too much, and he can't stop talking in pop cliché. "What can you do for us?" a job interviewer asks. Jay: "I can hoist a jack, I can lay a track, I can pick and shovel too, Lord Lord . . ." He doesn't get the job.

If there's a lesson in this novel it's for those who pretend to see things aright (as "they are"), because, of course, they don't. The novel's world of bourgeois normality has problems of its own, of which Jay is acutely aware: his alcoholic father's, for instance. Goldman, for her part, attends to the novelist's "normal" world: a few of her vignettes read like parodies of novels whose characters know steadily what they are about and walk in straight lines. Jay's applying to a publishing house even offers her a chance to parody the Brief Review.

Souls and Bodies, by David Lodge. Morrow, \$12.50.

Lodge begins his novel by moving through the minds of nine rather ordinary Catholic college students attending weekday Mass. It's London, 1952, and they are as young people will be in such circumstances: distracted, naively intent, bored, sex-possessed. The point is that they are there early on a cold

February morning in various attitudes of worship. Why? Because it's good for their souls, of course. "Up there was Heaven; down there was Hell. The name of the game was Salvation, the object to get to Heaven and avoid Hell." Concise and sufficient; something to live by. (What wouldn't Jay give for that?)

These are indeed people grooved to run along straight lines, toward marriage, children, the great semi-professional middle class. And so they do run, in a way. But, being unremarkable, they neatly register too—in often ridiculous ways—the effects of a social revolution familiar to all of us. Sex, in particular, is troublesomely much on their minds. "At some point in the nineteen sixties," though, "Hell disappears." On the whole, it's quite a relief. For one thing it makes answering life's Big Question—how far can you go?—a lot easier. (The answer is: as far as you want.)

Unfortunately, as Hell disappears, so does a "whole system of religious authority and obedience," and that creates any number of problems for Lodge's characters (now grown), sometimes not so funny. ("I did say this wasn't a comic novel, exactly," he interrupts after one especially tragic scene.) The biggest problem is this: their hard-won freedom and the hedonism that urged it into being are bound to call everything into question: "the relation between authority and conscience, between the religious and lay vocations, between flesh and spirit." And when they do, the ridiculously precise questions the Church used to ask—about the Proper Purpose of Sex and the Proper Means of Contraception—begin to look a lot more profound, being moot. There's no going back, though, is there?

Lodge never lets his own deft homilies on the seriousness of all this obscure its comedy: the "open" masses, the "modern" exegesis (did the Resurrection really happen?), the silly self-discoveries, the liberated rhetoric, the half-hearted adulteries and sexual fumbblings, the desperate assault on taboo. "Where does it end?" asks Polly, erotically

sated but somehow unsatisfied. "It ends with old age," her husband answers. "Impotence. Death. But I don't intend to give in until I absolutely have to."

Death is indeed the somber host to all this farce: as Lodge points out, it's the overwhelming question to which sex has no answer. (The Church used to.) "In matters of belief," Lodge observes, "it is a nice question how far you can go... without throwing out something vital!" But he doesn't leave us there (thank God): *Polly's* son, of all people, meets a young woman at Oxford (that puts him about where his mother was when we came in) and—guess what?—she converts him to Catholicism. More surprise: "the two young people are quite traditionally and chastely engaged."

A Private Life, by Cynthia Propper Seton. Norton. \$10.95.

Fanny Foote is that most tragic of all modern fictional characters, an aspiring magazine journalist. "You know what I am?" she asks. "Shallow. I mean *really* shallow." Her roommate shares a thought: "In a narcissistic culture to be shallow is, actually, to adapt." In fact, Fanny isn't shallow, but she is self-deprecating (could you tell?) and occasionally depressed, "not seriously, clinically depressed but unpleasantly grounded, in part by her low wages, but also by the failure of freedom to bring extravagant returns, or even point the way." If that sounds like one of Lodge's theses, it is; Seton treats it with a wit and subtlety all her own.

Fanny goes to France to write a story about Carrie Foote, her aunt, who has been living (chastely) with a large and notorious woman of ambiguous sexual inclinations: Lutécie Tavernier. "You don't look like your father," Lutécie says upon seeing her. "And you don't look like your mother!" And: "I want you to meet our dear devoted friend Benedict Jones. He's just stopped for the night. He's fallen off a donkey and lost his tooth. He tripped on his own legs. They were too long. We're having whisky."

In Lutécie's day, "There was an

art of unconventional living and she was widely admired as a mistress of it." But now, she complains, "there wasn't a nuance left. The very word sex had lost its raciness." Carrie, on the other hand, broke with her family and left America out of a scruple that seems oddly quaint today (*he* was married). "Fifteen years ago divorce was shocking," she explains, "love affairs were shocking." Fifteen years ago, too, one knew "that the structure of ethical assumptions was buckling, and one certainly had reason to wonder what would be left in the course of time. But there *was* no course of time. It sank like a stone."

But it didn't, if Fanny is any measure. She hasn't led a life of Emersonian chastity, but neither has she pushed away doubts about what all this freedom means; that's why she's "unpleasantly grounded" (and she's not even Catholic). When she does meet what her aunt would call a "worthwhile love"—picture John Ruskin with a sense of humor—her intentions are nicely restrained, and so are his. There's nothing in any of it to offend Emerson, except some irony: "The boots, the skirt, her hair—she looked like Lara in *Dr. Zhivago*, a measure of his romantic love, or yet another example of the pervasive influence of the motion-picture industry in the twentieth century." He intends to start a school: "No study hall, no vandalism, no drugs, no cars, no Second Chance... no jeans." And "no new criticism, no semiotics, no deconstruction." "It must take a fantastic amount of *courage*," she responds, "to say *no jeans*, *no semiotics*, and *mean it*." And there's more to courage than that: Guess what they agree to put off until *after* the wedding?

Group Portrait, by Nicholas Delbanco. Morrow. \$11.50.

In 1900 Joseph Conrad, Stephen Crane, Ford Madox Ford, Henry James, and H. G. Wells were neighbors, two hours by train from London, in Kent and East Sussex. Delbanco's portrait of them there—pulled together from letters, sketches, memoirs, biographies—is modest and appreciative, composed in just

proportions. He pairs James with Wells, Ford with Conrad; Crane stands slightly apart, as he should.

A "group" comprising such men enjoys no easy definition: none was native to the place (three arrived there from other countries altogether); they shared no literary doctrine or style; in temperament and talent they differed greatly. Even so, proximity afforded them a "sense of shared endeavor" and allowed for an exchange of brilliant talk... sharing of subjects that hang in the air." Out of it all came literature some of it great, some of it, like Ford's, wrongly neglected today.

The play of "types" here is worthy of a novel (which may be why memoirs of the time, especially Ford's are unreliable). Wells compare James to a "painful hippopotamus resolved at any cost... upon picking up a pea which has got into the corner of its den." (HJ to HG: "find you perverse and I find you, on a whole side, unconscious.") In his collaborations with Conrad, Ford proves to be more helpful (supplying plot nearly always, a whole chapter at least once) than his detractors make out. He's even moved on one occasion. Crane appears swatting flies "with the bead-sight of his gun" and one night, after a poker game, leading a group of "unshaven friends" to Rye, first to its Mermaid Tavern, then to James' house. (They don't get in.)

Beneath the play of surfaces, of course, lies a steady seriousness about the intention and purposes of literature, and about its craft: that what invites the collaboration, stir the debate. These are writers whose life's work is grounded in the idea that there is a literary standard worth defending, an intellectual past worth preserving. Moreover, the are men "of the actual world," separated by design from the academy and from the tony literary coterie of the times. This puts them some distance from many novelists of today, and from their preoccupation with the "world within the world," with the "discrete" nature of things (Only disconnect.) It is among his many virtues of Delbanco's book that he is uneasy about this.

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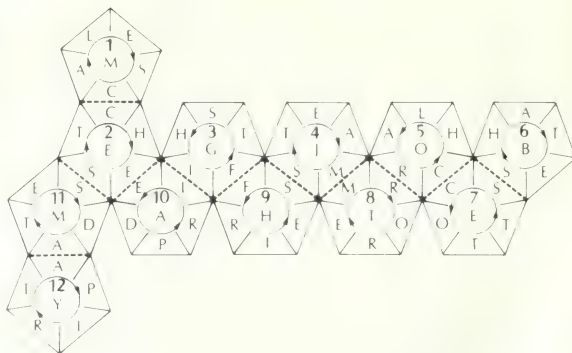
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Solution to the March Puzzle Notes for "March Dodecahedron"

The central squares reveal the names of the four March sisters from *Little Women*: Meg, Jo, Beth, Amy.

Five-letter words: A. pried, homonym; B. S(cot); C. shift, two meanings; D. scale, two meanings; E. team/s, s/team; F. tapir, homonym; G. Ch.-est; H. date; I. Fr.-e.s(upper); J. L-arch; K. Ro(r)em, anagram; L. hates, anagram; **Six-letter words:** M. fi(he)r; N. jet-Sam; O. bathes, anagram; P. etc.-he's; Q. dia- reversal; R. tremor, hidden; S. came-L(os Angeles); T. Ma's-Ted; U. choral, homonym; V. par(tial)ity; W. oc(reversal)-te(X)ts; X. f(L)ights.

PUZZLE

Crazy Quilt

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

(with acknowledgments to Albipedi of *The Listener*)

This month's instructions:

Answers begin at their appropriate numbers and run horizontally or vertically as usual. However, when a gridline is reached (gridlines intersect the puzzle every three spaces), the light may be displaced by one line (horizontal lights) or one column (vertical lights) until a further gridline is reached, and so forth. Each light is displaced at least once.

Answers include two proper names. As always, mental punctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The answer to last month's puzzle appears on page 111.

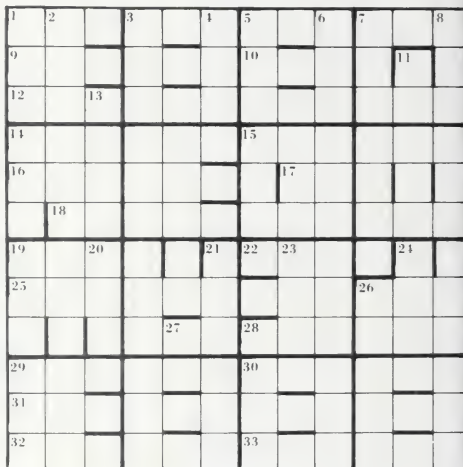
CLUES

ACROSS

1. Quilts having pronounced effect to offset aches (12)
9. Kill *Crazy Quilt* idea (9)
10. Hippie's understood about golfer's target being deceiving (6)
12. Star does tricks with lariat (6)
14. A tense ninety-nine-union patchwork (9)
16. Are we glib, foolishly harboring a bit of truth... hog-wash! (10)
17. Dowdy woman is female bum (5)
18. Latin in 500-yard dance (5)
19. Confining request: "Get packing" (6)
21. Plain cream carrier (7)
22. Show up lawyer's brief and object (6)
25. Artistes cancel *Times* issues (6)
28. Almost all of the sailors love the French style of cooking (6)
29. Exhaustive reference—doctors decline a copy (12)
30. Descendant of the kitchen school of painting? It recalls kitchen-sink drain work (3, 3)
31. Cure that's essential for extreme dyspepsia (4)
32. Breastbones or one attached to back (6)
33. Ronnie's heartless, confused, and comparatively curious (6)

CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Crazy Quilt, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by April 5. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive a one-year



DOWN

1. Siding with committee following applause (9)
2. Marine films and paints defeats (3, 6)
3. Ravel's arrangement of Lang tunc (8)
4. Last month I had, briefly, excellent resolve (6)
5. Aimless commercial break (6)
6. Tee up late, possibly producing a chip on the shoulder? (9)
7. Pay no attention to resorts region (6)
8. Government agent covers as utility employee (6)
11. With Puccini's limits assumed, conducted *Tosca*, for example (it's about time), *Butterfly*, etc. (11)
13. Gal's attire disturbed unsafe drivers (10)
15. Constructs water transportation with either end cut off! (6)
20. Outstanding TV picture (6)
23. Parton's bust... it's fishy! (6)
24. A doughnut's shape, to dress designer, is uplifting (6)
26. Records true copies (5)
27. Novel heroine is right in the middle of the hurricane (4)
28. Calgary's odd characters provide earthy material (4)

subscription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the May issue. Winners' names will be printed in the June issue. Winners of the February puzzle, "Printer's Devilry," are Michael Grigg, Potomac, Maryland; Jules Leopold, Palm Beach, Florida; and Nancy Sutherland, Seattle, Washington.

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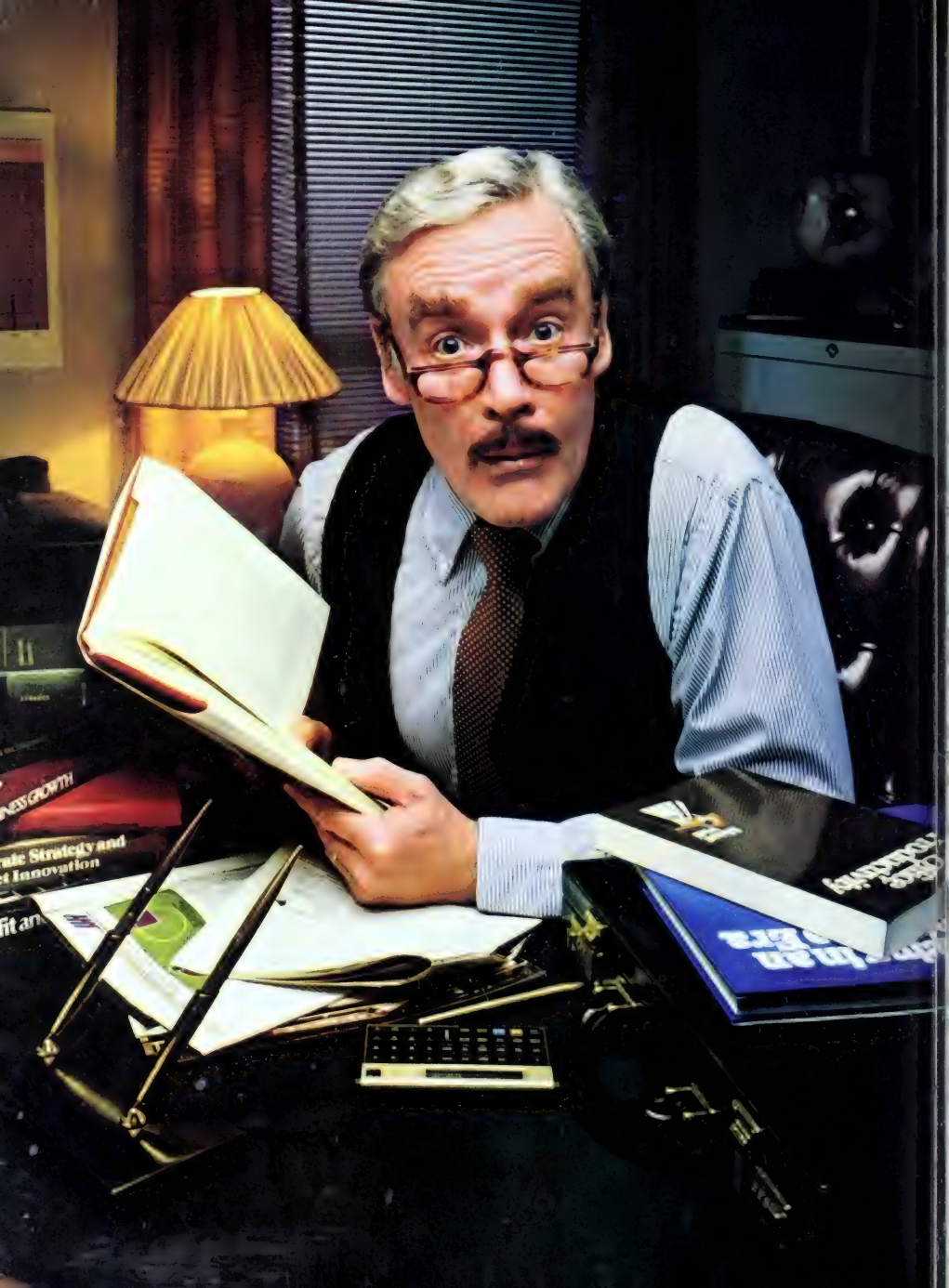
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There's more bad poetry than good policy in the antinuclear movement.

THE FOURTH ESTATE: CALAMITY JANE Art Levine
Terror stalks the *New York Times* Living section.

WASHINGTON: PROPAGANDA WARTS Tom Bethell
What the Voice of America makes of America.

LETTER FROM ABROAD: DON'T BE A BOER Geoffrey Wheatcroft
Class snobbery in South Africa.

CONTRA REAGANUM Nicholas von Hoffman
Ronald Reagan tricked us: he's doing exactly what he said he would do.
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LIVE SIX MONTHS WITH A MILLIONAIRE Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney
Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney wrote down everything he did for a year. Here is part of it.

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The odd events of an ordinary morning.

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The difference between a refugee from oppression and an illegal alien is... well, it's hard to say. The case of the Soviet Jews.

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ARTS AND LETTERS: WRITES OF PASSAGE Jeffrey Burke
The letter of recommendation as a social force and literary genre.

PUZZLE E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.
Multiple choice.



Cover illustration by Rick Meyerowitz

Where the Media Elite Stand

In the nation's shift from an industrial to an information society, a new elite has risen in the land. Its members work in the news media. They're the media's heavyweights, courted by politicians, studied by scholars, pampered by peers. Some of their bylines and TV images are familiar to millions.

They make up a new leadership group that "competes for influence alongside more traditional elites representing business, labor, government, and other sectors of society," asserts a major study performed under the auspices of Columbia University's Research Institute on International Change.

The research was directed by S. Robert Lichter of George Washington University and Stanley Rothman of Smith College. They have reported on their project in *Public Opinion* magazine, which says the findings raise "questions about journalism's qualifications as an 'objective' profession."

The study involved interviews with 240 journalists and broadcasters working for the most influential media outlets. These include the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Time, Newsweek, U.S. News & World Report, CBS, NBC, ABC.

Where stand the media elite ideologically?

Some 54% of leading journalists count themselves as liberals. Only 19% describe themselves as right of center. Even greater differences show up when they rate their cohorts. Fifty-six percent say the people they work with are mostly on the left and only 8% on the right. Overwhelmingly, the media elite vote for Democratic candidates in presidential elections.

The big guns of the media come down on the liberal side of a wide range of social and political issues. They show special fondness

for welfare capitalism. Some 68% believe the government should substantially reduce the income gap between rich and poor. Close to half feel the government should guarantee a job to anyone wanting one. Yet few are outright socialists. In fact, they stoutly spurn the notion that major corporations should be publicly owned. And they support a fundamental capitalist tenet that people with greater ability should earn more than those with less ability.

Despite acceptance of the economic order, many top journalists express general discontent with the social order. A substantial minority — 28% — favor overhauling the entire system through "a complete restructuring of its basic institutions." The same proportion take the view that *all* political systems are repressive because they concentrate power and authority in a few hands.

On international issues, a majority of the media elite believe U.S. economic exploitation has contributed to poverty in the Third World and that America's heavy use of natural resources is "immoral." By a three-to-one margin, they reject the view that Third World nations would be even worse off without the assistance they've received from the West.

In an information society, the upper-crust media practitioners are a telling force. "Cosmopolitan in their origins, liberal in their outlooks, they are aware and protective of their collective influence," Lichter and Rothman write. The group profiled by the study is "out of step with the public," *Public Opinion* opines.

At least now there's scholarly confirmation of the ideological and political tilt of many of the folks who declaim daily, in print and on the tube, on the shape of the world.



**UNITED
TECHNOLOGIES**

LETTERS

Harper's

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR are very welcome, especially if they are short and to the point. We are a hearing from readers, even though volume precludes individual acknowledgment.



Nurturing nature

I don't know what data Mr. Tucker drew on for the class concept of backpacking in "Is Nature Too Good for Us?" [*Harper's*, March], but if wilderness is indeed a playground for the white upper-middle class, it is not their fault. The urban poor could, if they were so moved, buy all the equipment that is needed for the price of a boom box and a few cassettes. The wealthy need only step out of their hundred-dollar-a-day lodges and thirty-five-foot Winnebagos. I guess the lower- and middle-middle classes must be those folks jammed into Park Service campgrounds with umbrella tents and Coleman stoves. They seem happy enough.

In my experience, most backpackers belong to a poverty-level subclass made up of college students and other young people. The values they find in wilderness have only a little to do with the intricate set that Tucker has erected and then triumphantly demolished.

Yes, the main attraction of backpacking is a temporary escape from noise, fumes, tension-inducing responsibilities, distressing landscapes, and all that is related. I have never met a backpacker who confessed to fantasies of primitivism or noble savagery over this. Most are content to enjoy without introspection the brief respite they find in the woods. None that I have known feels the least remorse or guilt over the possession and use of waterproof boots, Gore-Tex parkas, Hollofil fiber sleeping bags, aluminum pack frames, or any of the other products of civilization that make trips more comfortable. Why should they? They

will be back in civilization, paying their dues, soon enough. What Tucker (and Watt) cannot understand is that no one of any "class" will be able to enjoy anything distinct about our wilderness areas once they have been opened for exploitation.

But neither Tucker nor Watt seems to be able to think much about the future. How long might we expect American society to last, and what would the inheritors of it think, a few hundred years from now, of predecessors who left not a crumb of wilderness or a vein of minerals untouched in their greed for profits? *Not needs, but profits!* No one has alleged a worldwide unavailability of any mineral, and molybdenum would still be in Idaho's wilderness a few thousand years from now if it were needed then.

Ah, but I overdraw the issue? Mr. Tucker does not advocate *destroying* the wilderness. He only wants to violate it a little. ("Where tracts can be set aside from commercialism at no great cost, they should be.") Once the principle of the predominance of profits is accepted, there is no logical line, short of the "multiple use" concept, to apply to National Forest lands.

HARLEY BARNHART
Sarasota, Fla.

When I began William Tucker's article, I anticipated a thoughtful and constructive discussion of a complex issue. Instead, I found a hodgepodge of oversimplifications, caricatures, and slogans that contribute very little to the search for an honest understanding of our natural-resource stewardship responsibility.

Mr. Tucker questions "the argument that wilderness is a value against

which every other human activity must be judged." Does he really believe wilderness is propounded as an absolute good? In his sweeping overstatement, Tucker raises the specter of preservationists calling for more and more wilderness to make the world, somehow, a better place. The reality, however, is quite different. In specific places and for specific reasons, wilderness is a *competing* value, the relative importance of which is determined through elaborate procedures described in our laws. The wilderness alternative is a very reasonable response at a time when high technology and consumption make vulnerable even the most pristine and ecologically unusual areas. Just one of multiple potential uses, it preserves for a future generation the decision about how certain tracts of land can yield the greatest benefit. Wilderness is an option accepted or rejected on its merits, not an upper-middle-class whim or a cultist theology.

In Mr. Tucker's zeal to depict wilderness proponents as shortsighted and antihuman, he reveals these same faults in himself: shortsighted in equating stewardship with consumptive use, and antihuman in thinking people are better served by this facile attack on easy targets than by a balanced presentation of pertinent information. Mr. Tucker's article, in short, inspires rebuttal rather than discussion. One hopes that his book is more evenhanded.

STEPHEN C. NORRIS
Denver, Colo.



Total-person teeth

If someone had read David Owen's article "The Secret Lives of Dentists" [*Harper's*, March] to me, I would have sworn it had been published in the *National Enquirer*. This childish bunch of half truths and snide innuendo is a low blow to a hardworking and dedicated profession. It is nearly fifty-one years since I graduated from

dental school and I like to believe the service I have rendered my patients has been appreciated by them.

I do not know of a single case where a dentist took his own life. An alcoholic dentist doesn't stay in business very long. Perhaps I am naïve, having practiced in the state of Nebraska, which proclaims "The Good Life."

In dental school we were repeatedly told that we could expect to make a good living in the profession, but to forget about becoming rich. David Owen would have your readers believe that for a half century I wallowed in a "slough of despond." Not so.

DONALD J. KENNEDY, D.D.S.
Alliance, Neb.

I returned from my office tired tonight, but with a feeling of satisfaction and fulfillment. I had had a busy day, with many patients in pain who had come to me seeking relief. There were periodontal problems requiring surgery. There was an acute abscess requiring incision and drainage. There was a diabetic patient who bled severely during surgical extraction procedures. One patient had a white, possibly precancerous lesion on her cheek, of which she was unaware. She pledged immediately to never smoke again. There were two patients who had spent sleepless nights. All were in need of relief from their suffering, and when they left my office their pain was gone. They were all thankful, and I felt good.

What could have possessed David Owen to write those cruel injustices and unsupported exaggerations in his article? Perhaps he is a sick man? Perhaps he has abandoned ethics for monetary reward? Whatever the reason, I feel sorry for him. And I feel certain that the majority of the 190,000 or so dentists ethically practicing wonderful dentistry in this country, and their patients, will agree with me.

MONTAGUE A. CASHMAN, D.D.S.
Washington, D.C.

The otherwise fine article by David Owen is marred by an unbalanced view of TMJ (temporomandibular joint) practitioners.

TMJ has unfortunately become for the profession a catchall phrase for pain and abnormal function around the face and head, and for the public the subject of superficial media exploitation. Its causes are many—congenital or developmental anomalies,

infectious or degenerative diseases, trauma, and, in significant numbers, irregularities of the bite. The problem is one of differential diagnosis to determine the proper treatment.

It should be pointed out that only one authority (whose views are not universally accepted by the profession) was quoted as deploring bite correction for TMJ problems. Mr. Owen might have consulted other eminent scholars with impeccable credentials who do treat occlusion (correction of the bite).

It is true that there is a great deal of confusion and lack of information regarding TMJ and that some practitioners are attracted to the field for less than ethical reasons. But to lump all practitioners together with quackery and department-store dentistry does a disservice to many dedicated, conscientious dentists and to many patients with pain who could be diverted from proper treatment.

IRVING KITTA
New York, N.Y.

In 1965, I found myself in the middle of a major controversy in dentistry: what was the right way to clean teeth? We needed to be educated. *Preventive Dentistry* began to advertise Plaque Control for an increased income. Because so many dentists risked change, a major chronic degenerative disease has been brought under control in a number of dental offices throughout the world. Today there is another controversy: do teeth affect whole-person performance?

Perhaps David Owen should have talked to a total-person dental physician. Just as there are still dentists teaching their patients to brush their teeth the way they grow, there are still those who are Tooth-oriented. Some are Teeth-oriented. And, thank God, some are whole-person oriented. There will always be enough work for the dentist who invests in continuing education and technological improvement and who is willing to risk the quality of his or her life changing from Tooth to Teeth to Total-Person Care. Being a dentist does have to do with teeth, but certainly there is no more complex system in whole man than this stomatognathic, cranio-occipital mechanism through which we have chosen to intervene to improve the quality of life for all persons.

H. R. "PAT" YEARY, D.D.S.
Laredo, Tex.

Truth and accuracy

In the interest of truth, accuracy, and fair play, and in that of the 100,000 men and women in the public relations profession, P. J. Corkery's article "For Immediate Release" [*Harper's*, March] demands correction. The article gives a completely false impression of what public relations is, what it does, and how it is regarded by outstanding American leaders. Unfortunately anyone can call him- or herself a counsel on public relations, and your writer is apparently the victim of such misuse of the words.

Mr. Corkery is off the mark when he says of public relations, "basically, it is still a matter of manufacturing press kits." I have been in public relations for sixty-three years, and have never manufactured one in that time. For many years I have been agitating that public relations be defined by the state, as are other professions, that its practitioners be licensed and registered after examination of their education, training, and character, and that economic sanctions be placed on those members of the profession who transgress its ethics. Such action would eliminate the possibility of organizations such as the one Mr. Corkery refers to calling themselves public relations firms. It is evident that the writer of the article was working for press agents who called themselves counsels on public relations without rhyme or reason, and not relative to the applied social science that is the basis of public relations today.

EDWARD L. BERNAYS
Cambridge, Mass.

Harper's claims that P. J. Corkery "makes an honest living writing in Los Angeles." Where does he go when he's on a deadline and needs a fact about, or a pithy quotation from, a person, a corporation, a government agency, or even a magazine? To the public relations person. PR then does the legwork the journalist should have done in the first place. In fact, the March issue of *Harper's* is full of information gathered for its freelance writers and its editor by public relations people. That Hollywood public relations firm where Corkery worked exists to fill a need. Lazy, junket-taking, free-boozie-guzzling journalists will print the stuff handed

to them by such PR firms. Honest journalists, as he relates, reject it.

There is—and should be—an adversarial relationship between public relations people and journalists. The journalist is—or should be—interested only in getting as newsworthy and as accurate a story as he can. The public relations person wants the journalist to see his employer in the best possible light, given the facts. When interests clash, the good PR person continues giving the information requested by the good journalist and recognizes that there is always tomorrow.

WADSWORTH LIKELY
Public Relations Consultant
New York, N.Y.

P. J. Corkery is probably unaware that certain small suburbs of Los Angeles practice a weird, cabalistic religion involving human sacrifices—the sacrifice is inevitably some misinformed soul who has beslurred our fair city.

MARC S. TUCKER
El Segundo, Calif.

You will, I won't

Michael Kinsley's "Waiting for Lenny" [*Harper's*, March] is the kind of infuriating double-talk that has left the average wage earner poorer than he was ten years ago. Apparently Mr. Kinsley's belief in "generosity" doesn't extend to those who work for a living and simply can't afford the level of "welfare" Kinsley would like to see.

I pay more in taxes than I pay in rent, and I hate it. The libertarian argument against coercion has no answer because it is a valid argument. If Kinsley likes welfare let him pay out of his own pocket. In which case I won't mind every time I see the offspring of New York welfare recipients smoking grass on the subway with taxpayers' money.

MITCHELL LANGBERT
Hoboken, N.J.

I would have been surprised to read Michael Kinsley's poorly reasoned, silly column in any national magazine, but to find it in *Harper's* was a particularly cruel blow. Not even Mr. Kinsley's math was right. Big Government attempted and failed to save the woman eventually saved by Lenny Skutnik. The government's success

rate was therefore four out of five, or 80 percent. Lenny Skutnik's was 100 percent. Kinsley knows that 100 is larger than 80.

To imagine that bereft of governmental generosity the victims of the Potomac would have been solely dependent on the stamina of poor Lenny Skutnik is ludicrous. In a truly free society, people will still want helicopters for a variety of purposes, and it is highly unlikely that on hearing the news of an airplane crash in the Potomac the pilots of these vehicles would stand around saying, "I will if you will."

That process of saying "I will if you will" is not called voting, it is called ducking responsibility for your actions. As Kinsley so clearly points out, people will always find ways to pressure others into cooperation, but at this point only the government can force compliance by the threat of confiscation of property or imprisonment. The bank teller may have a tough time finding a new job, but employment at the bank was never "his" in the first place, and firing him is the worst the bank can legally do.

SANDRA HARRIS SONNTAG
Eugene, Ore.

Sensationalism

I recently received a letter inviting me to subscribe to *Harper's* and was considering doing so. A look at the February issue, however, has led me to change my mind. I do not wish to support a magazine that calls a woman writer, diplomat, and politician a "courtesan." In fact, if such sensationalism represents an effort to revitalize your image and increase your circulation, it would have been better to go out of business.

MARILYN FRENCH
New York, N.Y.

OMISSIONS

Anne Tyler's story "The Country Cook," which appeared in the March issue of *Harper's*, was excerpted from her novel *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*, published by Knopf. We neglected to mention that the 3-volume facsimile reprint of *Minotaur* magazine reviewed by Joel Agee in the March issue was published by Rizzoli.

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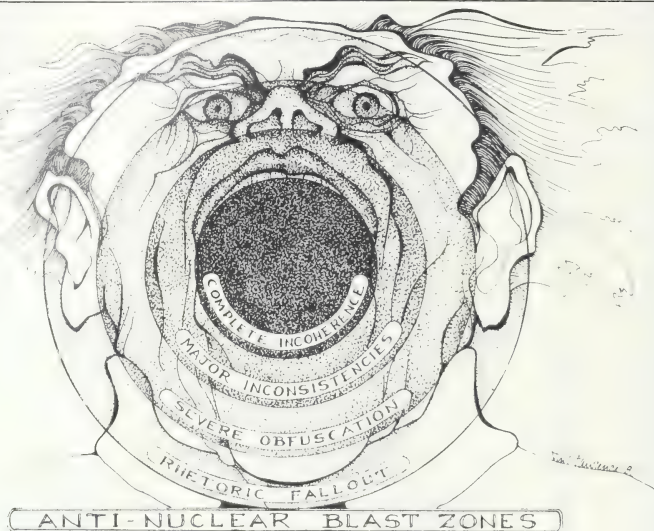


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THE EASY CHAIR



Vint Lawrence

NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST IN PERSPECTIVE

There's more bad poetry than good policy in the antinuclear movement.

by Michael Kinsley

IT WOULD be very sad if the world were destroyed in a nuclear holocaust. Jonathan Schell may well feel this sadness more profoundly than I do. His acclaimed three-part series in *The New Yorker*, "The Fate of The Earth," now rushed into book form by Knopf, is mostly a meditation on how sad it would be. He demands "the full emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and visceral understanding of the meaning of extinction." He asserts that even now "The peril of extinction surrounds . . . love with doubt." And "Politics, as it now exists, is . . . thoroughly compromised." And "Works of art, history, and thought . . . are undermined at their founda-

tions. . . ." Schell cites scientific evidence against any complaisant hope that human life, once destroyed in a nuclear war, might evolve again in a few million years. And don't suppose that humanity might escape nuclear war by fleeing the earth in a spaceship. Schell points out that this would be not only "an injustice to our birthplace and habitat," but futile: "[T]he fact is that wherever human beings went, there also would go the knowledge of how to build nuclear weapons, and, with it, the peril of extinction." I confess that this spaceship business had never occurred to me. But, really, I think a nuclear holocaust would be very, very sad.

That said, where do we stand?

WE STAND where we've stood for three decades, with East and West in a nuclear stalemate that could turn at any moment into mutual annihilation. In addition, we stand with nuclear weapons as the only genuine deterrent to a Soviet invasion of Europe (and of the Middle East, a threat implicitly invoked in the Carter Doctrine). Third, we stand at the edge of a large expansion of the nuclear club, with unpredictable consequences.

Over the past few months a mass political movement—the first in

years—has sprouted in the United States and Europe, demanding that something be done about this. Something, but what? On this, the movement is vaguer, because it's hard to think what the Western governments can do to prevent a nuclear war. On the third point, they might stop competing with one another to sell nuclear equipment to the third world, but it's already a little late for that. On the first point, they might show a bit more enthusiasm for a strategic arms limitation treaty. But this would be primarily a matter of saving money and reducing the risk of a disastrous accident. The basic balance of terror cannot be dismantled without perfect trust between the world's greatest enemies—an unlikely development.

The West really could do something about problem number two, the dependence on nuclear weapons to protect Europe. That something would be to replace nuclear arms with conventional defense. John Keegan assesses our conventional defense of Europe in this issue of *Harper's*. But a conventional defense strong enough to justify forswearing first use of nuclear weapons would require massively increased military spending for the other NATO countries, and probably a draft for the United States.

The thought of increasing conventional military strength to replace nuclear bombs (like the thought that a successful nuclear ban would increase the chance of conventional warfare) is utterly alien to the mentality of most antinuclear activists. Is the horror of nuclear weapons *sui generis*, or is the goal abolition of all weapons and war? Are there practical steps that can be taken, or must we await a transformation of human nature? Jonathan Schell's essay well illustrates the confusion of the antinuclear movement.

Perhaps it is *lèse majesté* to call a major three-part series in *The New Yorker* "pretentious," but "The Fate of The Earth" is one of the most pretentious things I've ever read, from the title through the grand finale (which begins, "Four and a half billion years ago, the earth was

formed"). "Gosh, is this profound," is about all that many sonorous passages convey:

[T]he limitless complexity [of nuclear war] sometimes seems to be as great as that of life itself. But if these effects should lead to human extinction, then all the complexity will give way to the utmost simplicity—the simplicity of nothingness.

Like the thought "I do not exist," the thought "Humanity is now extinct" is an impossible one for a rational person, because as soon as it is, we are not.

Even funnier are the pompous generalities that come attached to *New Yorker*-style cautionary notes:

Human beings have a worth—a worth that is sacred. But it is for human beings that they have that sacred worth, and for them that the other things in the creation have their worth (although it is a reminder of our indissoluble connection with the rest of life that many of our needs and desires are also felt by animals).

Hannah Arendt "never addressed the issue of nuclear arms," Schell tells us, but of course she is dragged in. "I have discovered her thinking to be an indispensable foundation for reflection on this question." Evil, you know. What is really indispensable is her graphic descriptions of Nazi death camps. They pop up here to illustrate the point (both unenlightening and untrue, on recent evidence) that you can't deny horrors that have already happened. Himmler appears a little later, expressing his desire to make Europe "Jew-free." Schell observes, "His remark applies equally well to a nuclear holocaust, which might render the earth 'human-free.'" In fact, Hannah and Himmler are here for aesthetic rather than pedagogical purposes. This is simply how you decorate apocalyptic bigthink.

Despite a lot of wacky judiciousness ("From the foregoing, it follows that there can be no justification for extinguishing mankind"), Schell's method is basically bullying rather than argument. The pomp is

intended to intimidate, and the moral solemnity is a form of blackmail. Unless you feel as anguished about nuclear war as Jonathan Schell, unless you worry about it *all the time* like him (allegedly), your complacency disqualifies you from objecting. In fact, you are suffering "a kind of sickness" or "a sort of mass insanity." So shut up.

Much of Schell's essay does take the form of argument, but it tends to be hothouse reasoning: huge and exotic blossoms of ratiocination that could grow only in an environment protected from the slightest chill of common sense. For example, here he is arguing that we should not have an experimental nuclear war in order to see what would happen:

We cannot run experiments with the earth, because we have only one earth, on which we depend for our survival; we are not in possession of any spare earths that we might blow up in some universal laboratory in order to discover their tolerance of nuclear holocausts. Hence, our knowledge of the resiliency of the earth in the face of nuclear attack is limited by our fear of bringing about just the event—human extinction—whose likelihood we are chiefly interested in finding out.

Now welcome please "The famous uncertainty principle, formulated by the German physicist Werner Heisenberg," which makes a brief star turn at this point in the argument. Its role is to escort "an opposite but [not very] related uncertainty principle: our knowledge of extinction is limited because the experiments with which we would carry out our observations interfere with us, the observers, and, in fact, might put an end to us."

The argument is crowned with a portentous aphorism: "the demand for certainty is the path toward death." Then, just to show that he's thought of everything, Schell considers and rejects the idea of holding an experimental nuclear war on another planet, "... for if we have no extra, dispensable earths to experiment with, neither are we in possession of any planets bearing

life of some different sort." The reader is left convinced that an experimental nuclear war is a bad idea, and that Jonathan Schell possesses either an absurdly swelled head, or a "philosophical synthesis" that is "profoundly new" (—Eliot Fremont-Smith, the *Village Voice*).

SHELL prefaces his discussion of the consequences of nuclear war with a discussion of the difficulty of imagining it. Some of the alleged obstacles are of this sort: "when we strain to picture what the scene would be like after a holocaust we tend to forget that for most people, and perhaps for all, it wouldn't be *like* anything, because they would be dead."

But the main set of obstacles involves a supposed reluctance of people to hear about it. Schell pleads with his readers to make this sacrifice: "it may be only by descending into this hell in imagination now that we can hope to escape descending into it in reality at some later time." He promises to protect their delicate sensibilities: "I hope in this article to proceed with the utmost possible respect for all forms of refusal to accept the unnatural and horrifying prospect of a nuclear holocaust." He flatters their "investigative modesty" as "itself... a token of our reluctance to extinguish ourselves." And thence to pages of the usual gruesome description. The horror is lightened only by some *New Yorkery* punctiliousness, as when having killed off millions in a one-megaton bomb over Manhattan, he adds that newspapers and dry leaves would ignite "in all five boroughs (though in only a small part of Staten Island)."

Schell's posture of reluctant scientific inquiry will be familiar to aficionados of pornographic movies. And there is something pornographic about the emphasis on grisly details that is the distinguishing feature of the antinuclear movement in its latest manifestation. Perhaps Jonathan Schell is so sensitive that he really does find these disaster scenarios painful to contemplate, and probably we all do withhold

true visceral understanding of what it would be like. But others will find such disaster scenarios grimly fascinating (certainly the most interesting part of Schell's book). Is that sick? If so, it is a sickness that is widespread, and one that the antinuclear movement both shares and exploits. So the coy posture is annoying.

But destruction of civilization, or even the agonizing death of everybody in the whole world, would be, to Schell, just a minor aspect of the tragedy of a nuclear holocaust. The greatest crime would be against "the helpless, speechless unborn." Schell brandishes this notion of the unborn as his trump card, in case anyone still thinks nuclear war is a good idea. By "the unborn," he does not merely mean fetuses (though by his analysis—liberals please note—abortion is unthinkably immoral). Nor does he mean the future human race as an entity. He does not even mean future people who might inherit a nuclear-wrecked civilization and environment. He means individual people who will *never be born* if there is no one left to conceive them. "While we can launch a first strike against them," Schell imitatively points out, "they have no forces with which to retaliate."

Schell concedes "the metaphysical-seeming perplexities involved in pondering the possible cancellation of people who do not yet exist—an apparently extreme effort of the imagination, which seems to require one first to summon before the mind's eye the countless possible people of the future generations and then to consign these incorporeal multitudes to a more profound nothingness..." But he's up to the challenge:

Death cuts off life; extinction cuts off birth. Death dispatches into the nothingness after life each person who has been born; extinction in one stroke locks up in the nothingness before life all the people who have not yet been born. For we are finite beings at both ends of our existence—natal as well as mortal—and it is the natality of our kind that extinction threatens. We have always been able to send

people to their death, but only now has it become possible to prevent all birth and so doom all future human beings to uncreation.

And so on and on. Schell is very strict about what might be called "alive-ism." Having waxed eloquent for pages about the unborn as repositories for our hopes and dreams, he stops to warn that we should not treat them merely "as auxiliaries to our needs," because "no human being, living or unborn, should be regarded as an auxiliary." The unborn, he scolds, "are not to be seen as beasts of burden..."

WELL, my goodness. Do we really have a moral obligation not to deny birth to everyone who, with a bit of help, might enjoy the "opportunity to be glad that they were born instead of having been prenatally severed from existence by us"? I shudder to think how I've failed. For that matter, I shudder for Jonathan Schell—for every moment he's spent banging away on his typewriter, instead of banging away elsewhere.

In solving the problem of nuclear war, Schell cautions, we must "act with the circumspection and modesty of a small minority," since "even if every person in the world were to enlist, the endeavor would include only an infinitesimal fraction of the people of the dead and unborn generations." Yes, the dead count too. So he proposes "a worldwide program of action," involving an "organization for the preservation of mankind." We must "delve to the bottom of the world" and then "take the world on our shoulders." He writes, "Our present system and the institutions that make it up are the debris of history. They have become inimical to life, and must be swept away." What he proposes, in short, is that the nations of the world abjure all further violence—nuclear and conventional warfare—and give up their sovereignty to some central organization.

This idea will win no prizes for circumspection and modesty. Other

problems come to mind, too. Like, how shall we arrange all this? Schell writes:

I have not sought to define a political solution to the nuclear predicament—either to embark on the full-scale examination of the foundations of political thought which must be undertaken... or to work out the practical steps... I have left to others those awesome, urgent tasks.

Good heavens. This sudden abandonment, on page 219, puts Schell's hyperventilated rhetoric in an odd light. Is he just going to head off on a book tour and leave us stranded?

Schell is convinced, though, like the rest of the antinuclear movement, that the main task is education—convincing people of how bad a nuclear war would be. "If we did acknowledge the full dimension of the peril... extinction would at that moment become not only 'unthinkable' but also undoable." The key word here is "we." But there is no "we." There are individual actors who cannot completely know or trust one another. That's life. Even if everyone in the world shared Schell's overwrought feelings about nuclear war, the basic dilemma would not disappear: the best defense against an enemy's use or threat to use nuclear weapons is the threat to use them back.

Schell correctly points out the weakness in deterrence theory: since nuclear wars are unwinnable, it's hard to make a potential aggressor believe you would actually strike back once your country was in ruins. "[O]ne cannot credibly deter a first strike with a second strike whose raison d'être dissolves the moment the first strike arrives." This may be "a monumental logical mistake," as Schell asserts, but it has prevented anyone from using a nuclear weapon, or even overtly threatening to use one first, for thirty-five years. And in any event, pending his proposed outburst of "love, a spiritual energy that the human heart can pit against the physical energy released from the heart of matter," it's all we've got.

So the first problem with Schell's solution is that you can't get there from here.

The second problem is what "there" could be like. Speaking, if I may, for the unborn, I wonder if they might not prefer the risk of not being born at all to the certainty of being born into the world Schell is prepared to will them.

The supreme silliness of "The Fate of The Earth," and of much of the antinuclear movement, is the insistence that any kind of perspective on nuclear war is immoral. Schell complains, "It is as though life itself were one huge distraction, diverting our attention from the peril to life." And to Schell, apparently, all considerations apart from the danger of nuclear war are mere distractions. He repeatedly asks, What could be worse than the total annihilation of the earth and everything and everyone on it forever and ever? He demands that "this possibility must be dealt with morally and politically as though it were a certainty." We can opt for "human survival," or for "our transient aims and fallible convictions" and "our political and military traditions."

On the one side stand human life and the terrestrial creation. On the other side stands a particular organization of human life—the system of independent, sovereign nation-states.

Gee, I just can't decide. Can you?

If the choice were "survival" versus "distractions," it would be easy,

and Schell wants to make it seem easy (though I have to wonder whether he really lives his own life at the peak of obsessive hysteria posited in his writing). In fact, that's not the choice. The choice is between the chance, not the certainty, of a disaster of uncertain magnitude, versus institutional and social arrangements that have some real charm.

Schell suggests at one point that "say, liberty" and other "benefits of life" are relatively unimportant in his scheme of things, because

to speak of sacrificing the species for the sake of one of these benefits involves one in the absurdity of wanting to destroy something in order to preserve one of its parts.

But it's clear that he imagines his postnuclear world as a delightful lion-and-lamb affair, no nation-states, no war, free hors d'oeuvres at the Algonquin bar, a place anyone would prefer even apart from the nuclear dilemma. Some of his admirers know better. In a recent column, Eliot Fremont-Smith of the *Village Voice* expressed the general dazzlement "The Fate of The Earth" has induced in the New York literary scene. He called on Knopf to cancel the rest of its spring list in deference to Schell's vital message. But Fremont-Smith did indicate some passing regret for what might have to be given up when Schell's world organization replaces national sovereignty. His list includes "free-

Negligible Literary Anecdotes No. 3



by John Morressy

On a visit to Jaffrey, New Hampshire, Willa Cather walked clear across town on a hot day in July to get a vanilla ice-cream cone. The vanilla was all gone. She settled for strawberry.

dom, liberties, social justice"—but he is willing to kiss these trinkets away in the name of "a higher and longer-viewed morality." Others may demur.

Actually, if Schell and his admirers really believe that the nuclear peril outweighs all other considerations, they are making unnecessary work for themselves by proposing to convince all the leaders of the world to lay down their weapons. Schell concedes that the people of the Soviet Union don't have much influence over their government, and suggests, rather lamely, that "public opinion in the free countries would have to...bring its pressure to bear, as best it could, on all governments." But why not avoid this problem by concentrating on our own governments? Schell is right: the doctrine of deterrence is only necessary for nation-states that wish to preserve themselves as political entities. Nothing would reduce the peril of nuclear war more quickly and dramatically than for the free and open societies of the West to renounce the use of nuclear weapons unilaterally. That would solve the flaw Schell sees in deterrence theory by making the Soviet threat to use them thoroughly credible, and therefore making their use unnecessary. More creatively, we might offer the Soviets a deal: you forswear nuclear weapons, and we'll forswear all weapons, nuclear and conventional. They might find this very tempting. So, by his own logic ("the nuclear powers put a higher value on national sovereignty than they do on human survival"), would Jonathan Schell.

In practice, the antinuclear movement is concentrating on the free governments of the West, for the obvious reason that these are the only governments susceptible to being influenced. I do not think most antinuclear protesters want unilateral disarmament. But the suspicion that they do is widespread among the political leaders they must attempt to persuade, and is hampering their basically worthy efforts. The glorious muddle of their thinking is hampering those efforts even more. What do they want? □

THE FOURTH ESTATE



John Brainerd

CALAMITY JANE

by Art Levine

The commander of the *New York Times* health elite orders constant vigilance against the enemies of the body.

LIKE A FEW million other Americans, I'm concerned about my health, and I do what I can to protect myself. I meditate, take vitamins, eat well-balanced meals, exercise moderately, and obsessively monitor the news for the latest threats to my health and safety. But until I started reading Jane Brody's "Personal Health" column in the Wednesday Living section of *The New York Times*, even I had no idea how much hard work was involved in getting and staying well. After reading all of Brody's columns for the year 1981, I have concluded that what my friends view as my paranoid hypochondria is actually a dangerously complacent response to the dangers posed to our frail bodies by a hostile, poisonous environment. The myth about the "lifestyle"

sections that the *Times* and other newspapers have developed in recent years is that they are oases of fluff for the upscale, affluent customers so dear to the hearts of advertisers. The average reader, buffeted by the bad news about the economy or El Salvador, is supposed to turn to these sections with a sigh of relief, descending into the articles on spring fashions or homemade sausages as if they were jacuzzis for the mind.

But anyone reading Jane Brody will know no such peace. Her succession of grim bulletins from the health front creates a mounting sense of panic not very different from the wave of murders and assaults reported on the *Times's* news pages, or screamed at New York-

Art Levine is a Washington-based freelance author.

ers daily in headlines in the *New York Post*.

Imagine, then, the terror that regularly confronts the average New Yorker. Let's take a young woman lawyer who works downtown on Wall Street. Passing by the afternoon *Post* with the headline **RAPIST STALKS CITY**, she claws her way through dozens of people on the subway platform. Inside the subway car, she's jammed against seedy-looking men, then forced to walk a gauntlet past young toughs to get to her apartment. Once inside, she relaxes on the couch from Bloomingdale's, opens the *Living* section, and learns from Jane Brody that she may need her left breast removed.

After spending a year with Jane Brody, I began to accept such fear as a normal part of life. In fact, I entered a world that might be called "Brodyland," a spook-house distortion of city life, in which everything—from food to vacations to my bedroom furniture—was fraught with unsuspected menace. Once "living" (as the *Times* calls it) in Brodyland, you also quickly become disabused of the notion that good health is fun. Forget those images you may have about the Me Generation: smiling, long-legged beauties in jogging suits and headbands, spooning down Dannon yogurt or swallowing Tab. With Miss Jane Brody as our headmistress, there's no time for any fooling around. The vigil over our fragile health must be constant.

As the New Year of 1981 opened, many New Yorkers looked forward to wintertime frolics and strolling down Fifth Avenue with loved ones. But those of us who enlisted in Brody's army knew we could not expect to get off that easily. Instead, Brody kicked off 1981 by telling us, "Though often the butt of jokes in and out of the bedroom, cold hands and feet are not funny to millions of people—most of them women—who suffer from Reynaud's disease." The year was only a week old, and already I had a new disease to worry about. This obscure ailment, if not treated, causes pain, lost dexterity, ulcers,

even gangrene. But in Brodyland there is always something you can do about a disease, even if you do not suffer from it. To prevent Reynaud's disease, Brody recommended whirling your arms around like a softball pitcher to increase the flow of blood to your fingers. If you avoid this regimen, the danger always lurks that your chilly fingers might develop gangrene and would have to be amputated. I thought, after reading this first column, that the extra time devoted to arm-whirling would be worth the investment. Little did I know how much more would be expected of me as a soldier in the war against ill health.

The next week, in her cheerless article on the flu, Brody declared that "short of becoming a recluse for the entire flu season," the only choice is an annual vaccination, a step with its own risks. The recluse concept thus seemed rather appealing. One advantage of being a recluse was that my schedule would be free for all the other demands Brody would place on my time.

Thus prepared, but with trembling fingers (Reynaud's disease?), I opened my January 21 *Times*, glanced at Brody's column, and breathed easily for the first time in weeks: it was an article on menstrual cramps. One of the few comforts Brody offers loyal readers is the knowledge that every few weeks there will be an article on a health issue that doesn't conceivably concern you. At the risk of sounding callous and hard-hearted, I have to admit that over the course of a year I ignored, or merely skimmed, articles on hysterectomies, raising adolescents, choosing a nursing home, menopause, and loose-fitting dentures. They just didn't grab me like the following headline (March 18): "A simple, 30-second examination can help detect testicular cancer." Up until then, I didn't know that there was anything called testicular cancer. Ouch! Fortunately, Brody tells us, "The prognosis these days is good for all testicular cancers," especially for those willing to sacrifice a testicle or two. So, as a thirty-two-year-old male, I could ignore the perils facing women and the el-

derly, but it wasn't as easy to laugh off this harsh statistic: "It is the most common solid tumor in men in the prime of life, striking seven or eight of 100,000 men aged 20 to 34." A quick self-examination—Brody says this should be done regularly—revealed that I wasn't one of those eight. At least not yet.

BUT back in January, my relief at not having to deal with menstrual cramps was short-lived. The following week, January 28, brought a classic in terrifying reporting from the Grim Reaper: "The air you breathe in your home or office may be hazardous to your health—more dangerous, in fact, than the outdoor air in the most polluted of cities." Thus, she foreclosed even the recluse approach to good health that she had tantalized us with only two weeks before. Like a journalistic Alfred Hitchcock, she created a pervasive, but vague, sense of menace.



"Many people don't realize that their 'perpetual cold' or other nagging symptoms may be caused by the very air they breathe in their homes, at school, or on the job. . . Indoor air pollution has been linked to a wide variety of adverse health effects, including headaches, respiratory problems, frequent colds, sore throats, chronic cough, skin rashes, eye irritation, lethargy, dizzi-

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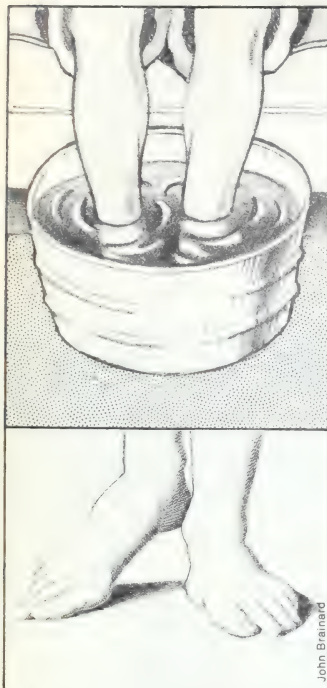
And it was far more nimble around the corners than its heavier competitors.

We like to think of the race not so much as the tortoise against the hare, but as a spirited thoroughbred against a legendary racing machine.



There's A Ford In America's Future.





John Brannard

ness and memory lapses. Long-term effects may include an increased risk of cancer." No one is safe: "Symptoms may occur in otherwise normal, healthy persons." The dangers are everywhere: "Virtually every household and office is a potential source of excessive amounts of one or another toxic pollutant—nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, formaldehyde, radon (a radioactive product of radium), sulphur dioxide, asbestos, not to mention the chemicals in hair sprays, deodorants, oven cleaners, paints, pesticides, laundry aids, floor and furniture polishes, glue, and ironically, air fresheners. Your kitchen range, fireplace, heater, rugs, walls, furniture, clothing, even the sheets you sleep on can be significant sources of indoor air pollution." I was being attacked, without my knowledge, by practically every inanimate object around me.

Fortunately, Brody offered me a

painstaking battle plan to beat back this chemical conspiracy to kill me in my sleep (assuming that I could ever again feel relaxed enough on my poisonous sheets to get any sleep). While keeping a wary eye on my seemingly innocent Glade air freshener, I did my best to follow her instructions, but it wasn't easy. For formaldehyde, I was told to wash all new permanent-press items several times before wearing them, and warned against buying a new house in the summer, when it's harder to detect the smell of formaldehyde.

This last blow at the ailing housing industry illustrates a strong but unspoken assumption that runs through Brody's columns. This is that only a small fraction of the American population will have the obsessive self-concern to follow her advice. In a 1982 column, she told readers always to request an aisle seat on airplanes, in order to take regular strolls during lengthy flights, as a precaution against back ailments. (Naturally, she also recommended a series of back exercises twice a day.) On June 24, 1981, she recommended special ordering of airplane meals. "You can usually dine on a better-tasting and more healthful meal than your planemates get," she told her troops. Now, obviously, everyone cannot have an aisle seat, and there would be chaos if everyone insisted on special airplane meals and no one bought homes during the summer. The implication is that only a special few who are willing to inconvenience themselves and others for the cause—the health elite—deserve the benefits. This Ayn Rand-like tone may weary or alienate the many readers who might otherwise benefit from the large part of her advice that is extremely sensible.

NO MATTER when you have bought your house, Brody recommends a detailed assault against home pollutants. Back in January 1981, discussing radon (which causes lung cancer), she warned ominously, "Levels in the home often exceed

those outdoors, and may reach the amount in a uranium mine." But to determine whether there actually is any radon in your home is rather difficult: it requires "a month-long measurement on a film that registers radioactivity." After that chore is done, Brody advised the panic-stricken homeowner, "A home found to be heavily contaminated can be protected by applying epoxy or other sealant to the basement floor and walls, and sealing all cracks between the basement and first floor, and around utility intakes." January concluded in style with a column (January 28) advising homeowners to forgo chemical products until winter is over, and to wear face masks when using paint or oven cleaners.

With news about asthma, senility, and children's teeth in February, I had little to worry about personally, but I did learn how arduous preventive health measures could be. In her February 18 column, headlined "A child's tooth decay can be prevented," I gained further insights into the difficulty of child-raising. Besides urging expectant mothers to take "prenatal fluoride supplements," Brody tells parents, "Until a child is about eight, parents should assume responsibility for daily tooth cleaning." For those parents who think this merely means frequent nagging, Brody corrects such a misunderstanding: "Younger children usually lack the dexterity to do a thorough job themselves. By holding the child's head in your lap, you can clean all the teeth, cheek-side and tongue-side up. Use a soft brush and a small amount of fluoridated toothpaste on your child's teeth twice a day—after breakfast and before bed. After the molars come in, daily use of a dental floss to clean debris from between them is recommended." Brody does not quail, though others might, at the thought of cornering, lapping, and flossing an eight-year-old boy twice a day.

March 1, 1981, dawned with this perennial existentialist dilemma: TO GET SHOTS OR NOT? The warming rays of the sun had an equally salutary effect on a little-known side of Jane Brody, her skills as a lyric

poet of nature. She opened her column with these memorable lines: "When the buds of spring first appear on trees and shrubs, the thoughts of many a summertime wheezer and sneezer turn to allergy shots." But, she went on to say, they are no panacea, and "for many kinds of allergies, they are wholly inappropriate." Her column, alas, gave no definitive answer on what allergy sufferers should do.

I was also distraught to learn that my reliance on vitamins endangered my health. Brody's March 25 column was called "The dangers of nutritional misinformation," and opened with a horror story about a mother who permanently stunted her child's growth with huge doses of vitamin A. She lectured those of us who believe in the efficacy of vitamins by alleging that we are spending our money on "worthless" products. April 8 brought me the unwelcome news that my walking program was probably insufficient, and I ought to be swimming instead.

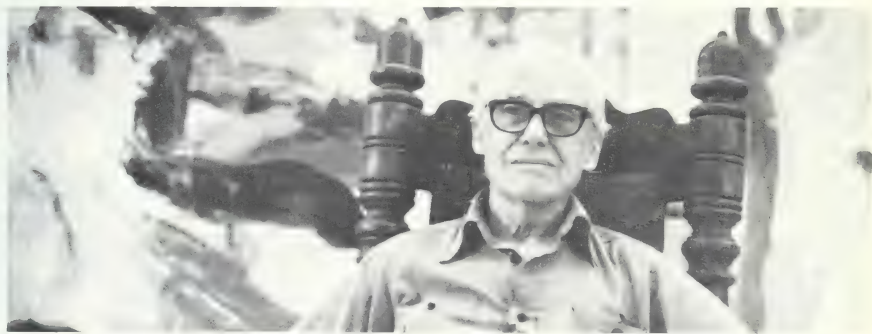
In fact, April was perhaps the

gloomiest of months in Brodyland, despite the festive air in the outside world. Heedless of the season, she offered us a depressing series of articles on cancer (April 15) and chronic pain (April 22 and 29). With such upbeat headlines as "Pain: For Millions, a Daily Reality," Brody told us about how widespread these problems are, while offering us tiny glimmers of hope in the way of referrals to treatment centers.

The next month was hardly any happier, as I got to find out just how sick I really was. In her May 13 column, Brody provided us with a complete "Personal Health Inventory," designed to determine our health habits and hence our "medical age." As she informed us, "Few people realize that, medically speaking, they may actually be older than their chronological age. That is a lot worse than simply looking old because it means that they may have a shorter life expectancy than their age would give them. It also means that they are susceptible to serious illnesses that normally afflict older

people." Naturally, it was with some trepidation that I filled out the chart, with questions on diet, exercise, stress, and other health factors. My calculations revealed that I was actually eighty-two years old, medically speaking. With my blood pressure rising dangerously at the sight of those figures, I rechecked my calculations and found that I was a more reassuring 30.2 years old.

I WAS feeling pretty cocky about my health until the next Wednesday, May 20. Then she dropped this bombshell: "Pets, when they are improperly chosen or cared for, can be a source of disease." Not only did I have to contend with threats from furniture and deodorant cans, but now even my dog, Bowser, was turning against me. Brody opened with a horrifying tale about a Virginia housewife who developed severe leg pains, swollen glands, a persistent high fever, loss of appetite, and extreme weakness after befriending some stray cats. Brody went on to warn, "At least



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40 different diseases can be transmitted from pets to people... Sometimes just breathing the air in the vicinity of an infected pet can cause illness." Among the most common diseases: roundworm, heartworm, toxoplasmosis, psittacosis, salmonellosis, cat-scratch fever (I'd always thought that was just a Ted Nugent song), and pasturella.

As a protective measure, Brody advised, "Acquire pets only from a reliable dealer who practices good sanitation." I looked over suspiciously at Bowser, who was given to me by a friend. My little dog looked up at me with those pleading brown eyes as I decided whether or not to shoot him. I had to do something drastic if I wanted to put myself out of my misery. Eventually, I decided that another visit to the veterinarian (for Bowser) was what was needed.

By now, summertime was coming, and Brody proved adept as ever at catering to our insecurities. On June 3, she told any dieters getting ready for a summer of fun that the current reducing fad, the Beverly Hills Diet, was not only useless but dangerous. It only causes diarrhea and flatulence, while robbing the body of essential nutrients.

Those of us who wanted to get in shape through walking learned on June 16 that "an estimated 87 percent of Americans suffer from a foot problem." Brody warned, "With each step, minor abnormalities in foot structures or shoes that don't fit right, or both, can result in such ailments as corns, calluses, bunions and hammer toes." And not much hope is offered for the self-reliant among us: "Those who try to cope with foot problems on their own often throw good money after bad with purchases of inappropriate over-the-counter medications and appliances. In some cases, self-treatment can make matters worse." Yet on top of the other Brody-inspired regimens that now took up most of my waking hours, I was advised that "feet should be cleansed once or twice a day, dried carefully and dusted with foot powder. A 10-minute soak in warm water may be the best remedy for tired feet."

After almost half a year as a Brodyite, I was ready for a relaxing vacation. But Calamity Jane struck again on June 24, with the news that "Vacations can spell disaster even for the most disciplined of diners." Brody observed, "Confronted three times a day with calorie-laden restaurant menus, many throw caution to the winds and come home five or more pounds heavier and sometimes with raised serum cholesterol and blood pressure to boot."

Constant vigilance is needed: "Even those who try to make sensible choices are often fooled by the chef, who may add a tablespoon or two of butter to an otherwise lean-sounding fish or chicken dish, or spike the cold vegetable soup with a generous dollop of sour cream, or drown the low-calorie salad in an oily dressing." Careful scrutiny of menus and no-nonsense instructions to waiters are among the few safeguards available to the adventuring health buff. But even Brody is not heartless: "Don't be afraid to splurge. After all, it's your vacation. A feast now and then on a high-fat, high-calorie meal won't hurt you if you eat sensibly the rest of the time and get back to normal the next day."

Returning from my vacation, I was feeling a bit anxious and thought it would be worth my while to see my doctor and dentist to check up on my health. But Brody's July 1 column warned me that even a doctor's office is no safe harbor. She wrote, "Lay people seem to have paid little attention to the most common nonnatural source of potentially harmful radiation: medical and dental X-rays, which, together, account for more than 90 percent of the public's exposure to man-made radiation... Many health-related X-ray exposures are inappropriate or unnecessary, and some of those that are needed involve far more radiation than is required for necessary diagnosis." Other diagnostic tools also pose problems. In an August 19 report on lab tests, she wrote, "The results can be distorted by diet (which is why some are done only after an eight-hour

fast), vigorous exercise, over-the-counter and prescription drugs (including aspirin, vitamins and birth-control pills), alcohol, lack of sleep, stress, fear or anxiety." After reading that, who had anxiety? But to reassure myself, I took her advice on this issue by skipping work for a day to read a paperback, *The Encyclopedia of Medical Tests*, which provides detailed information on hundreds of medical tests and on the factors that can distort the results. There is no sense in being unprepared.

I finally decided to put off seeing any health specialists until later in the year, and I'm glad I did, because I had second thoughts about my current crew after reading about the stringent guidelines I should use when judging my doctor (December 23) and dentist (November 18).

AS THE YEAR wore on, I began to worry whether all this worrying about my health was good for me. It was Brody, of all people, who first raised the issue, after months of urgent health warnings about the need for vigilance. On August 26, in her annual article on stress, she recommended a typically time-consuming package of daily aerobic exercises, relaxation breaks, and meditation periods, along with a general endorsement of "clean living." But she also offered this novel advice: "Get outside yourself. Stress causes people to turn into themselves and focus too much on their own problems." Could this be Jane ("Is There Lint in Your Navel?") Brody talking?

There was no need to worry, because by September she was in the trenches again, cabling back warnings to her troops. The highlight of the month was an admittedly informative two-parter on strokes, which began by listing a few common myths, among them, "Strokes happen only to older people." That caught my eye as I nervously glanced down the checklist of contributing factors: high blood pressure, high-fat diet, the ever-present stress, inactivity, smoking, obesity,

and oral contraceptives. I was safe on most counts. For now.

In the meantime, I knew I could protect myself by following her advice on WHAT BELONGS IN A MEDICINE CABINET. After conducting an inventory of the current contents, I turned to the business of stocking the dozens of life-or-death items that Brody mandated, among them an eye wash and eye cup, hydrocortisone cream, bandages, syrup of ipecac, activated charcoal, surgical tweezers with a built-in magnifier, ice bag, hot-water bottle, heating pad, Di-Gel, simethicone, Kaopectate, nasal spray, and eardrops. With my medicine cabinet thus ready to handle any neighborhood plagues or nuclear attacks, I could agree with Brody's assessment: "Often, if you are well equipped at home, you can avoid a stressful and costly trip to a hospital emergency room or physician's office." Secure in my medical lair, I was even thinking of going into the doctor business for myself.

But doctors still have a place in Brodyland, as shown by her articles on colon cancer (October 7), arthritis (October 14 and 21), and psychotherapies (October 28). After getting through November practically scot-free, with only articles on such mild topics as contact lenses and stretching to worry about, I looked forward with hope to my final month in Brody's army.

But December was a cruel month. While other holiday revelers drove around without seat belts or toasted each other with liquor at parties, I stayed at home and wondered whether I qualified as an alcoholic (December 16). Finally, on the day before New Year's Eve, I decided to celebrate my year with Jane Brody by treating myself to a hearty, nutritious breakfast, complete with a big bowl of cereal. What could be more healthful? Unfortunately, that was the day she chose to write BREAKFAST CEREAL: A BUYER'S GUIDE. I thought I was eating soundly by choosing Wheaties, but I was wrong: it has more than 300 milligrams of sodium per serving. A dangerously high amount. Happy New Year. □



PROPAGANDA WARTS

by Tom Bethell

What the Voice of America makes of America.

NO SOONER had Phil Nicolaides arrived at his desk in Washington last fall than he broke his own first rule. He put a sheet of paper in the typewriter, and without further ado began tapping out his thoughts to his new boss, James B. Conkling, the recently appointed director of the Voice of America. "In our recent discussion," Nicolaides began, "you reviewed a number of problems at VOA and asked me to come up with some considered recommendations." Before being appointed VOA's deputy program director for commentary and news analysis—a job described in the press as "ideologically sensitive" after he became notorious—Nicolaides was a political commentator for a radio station in Houston, a philosophy teacher at Fordham University, a contributor to the conservative weekly *Human Events*, and a cartoonist whose weekly caricature "Nicolaides Nibs & Nobs" appeared for a while in the *Santa Ana Register*.

Tom Bethell holds the DeWitt Wallace Chair in Communications at the American Enterprise Institute and contributes to many periodicals.

In the course of working on campaigns for such political candidates as James Buckley in New York (1970) and Phil Gramm in Texas (1978), usually in charge of TV and radio advertising, Nicolaides learned to warn campaign workers: before you write anything down, try to imagine what it would look like on the front page of the daily newspaper. If that mental picture of the news is discouraging, don't write it down. His advice was based on the well-known tendency of campaign workers to infiltrate one another's operations in the hope of leaking damaging material to the press. As things turned out, his years of experience counted for less than his inability to take his own advice.

THE Voice of America began broadcasting to the world shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and today has a budget of \$109 million, employs 2,200 people, and broadcasts to over 100 million listeners in thirty-nine languages. (Except for Portugal, it does not broadcast to west European countries.) VOA's



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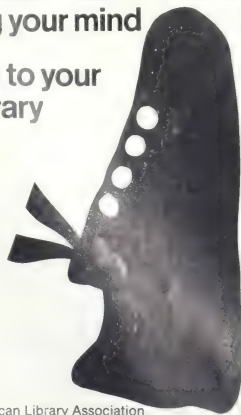
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charter, rewritten in 1976, is vague in the extreme, declaring that VOA news will be "accurate, objective and comprehensive," presenting a "balanced and comprehensive projection of significant American thought and institutions."

VOA is part of the U.S. International Communications Agency (the once and, apparently, future U.S. Information Agency), and is not to be confused with Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, which broadcast to countries behind the Iron Curtain and receive a U.S. government appropriation of \$86 million. (Originally they were funded by the CIA.) Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty are "surrogate" radio stations, giving news about communist-bloc countries to them, the assumption being that such news is not available from communist media. VOA, on the other hand, broadcasts American news and commentary to many countries, including Iron Curtain countries.

In the early postwar years, and on through the Cold War and the 1950s, VOA personnel regarded the Voice as an instrument in a "war of ideas," its "mission" to extol the virtues of America as a country where liberty and decency prevailed, in contrast to the oppressed, coerced, imprisoned nations under Soviet and communist domination.

But one day we woke up to find that President Richard M. Nixon was staying in a Kremlin apartment (the Age of Détente had begun), and journalists were winning awards for publishing the Pentagon Papers, for exposing the CIA, and finally for contributing to the overthrow of the aforementioned Kremlin lodger. So a new philosophy emerged in the Voice of America (and in the news media), one that was summarized by the phrase "warts and all." According to the theory, listeners and readers across the world would respect America even more, because it was not afraid to say unflattering things about itself or show itself in an unsavory light. In newsrooms across the land, the idea was elevated to the status of dogma.

Most of the ninety or so reporters in the Voice of America's news-

room espoused the warts-and-all theory. Nicolaides describes their outlook this way: "They've got a journalism degree from Stonybrook State, let's say, or they're been news-readers at a radio station in Media, Pennsylvania, and now they've come to a safe job, with a nice pension, in Washington. But they have an uneasy sense of being journalists manqués—they're not allowed into the House and Senate press galleries, although correspondents from Tass and Radio Bulgaria are. So they're eager to play Courageous Journalist and acquire 'fearless independence' credentials. These are won by enthusiastically depicting America with warts. Cliff Groce, a longtime newsmen here, tells people that Watgate was VOA's 'finest hour.'"

The Soviet Politburo, too, was happy with the new policy. In 1973 the Soviets stopped jamming VOA's broadcasts behind the Iron Curtain, resuming again only in 1980, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the emergence of Solidarity in Poland. (Jamming is an expensive business, costing approximately three times the expense of the original broadcast. It is estimated that jamming costs the Soviet Union at least \$250 million a year.)

THE AUTONOMY and independence of journalists at the VOA seemed to them threatened on three sides. The translators and broadcasters in the foreign language services, often foreign-born, often stubbornly anti-communist, were inclined to resist the warts-and-all tendency. The foreign service information officers who come from the State Department to do a two-year stint at VOA were seen, with some reason, as pussyfoot bureaucrats forever trying to water down Voice broadcasts into State Department releases. Similarly, the language service "émigrés" see the foreign service officers as "tea pourers" who want above all to remain on good terms with the country or countries they plan to return to when their State Department careers resume. "They want to go back

to pouring tea—or, rather, having it poured for them,” a broadcaster in the U.S.S.R. division explained. Third, there were the political appointees: those who came and went every four years and were forever threatening to “politicize” the Voice of America.

President Reagan appointed as head of USICA his next-door neighbor in Pacific Palisades, Charles Z. Wick, aged sixty-four, described by the *Washington Post* as “an energetic, wealthy California entrepreneur who prides himself on his long friendship with Reagan.” Radio Moscow, on the other hand, described Wick as “a millionaire—he made his money from real estate, show business, and brothels.” Russian listeners will not hear that false accusation rebutted, because VOA personnel are enjoined from “engaging in polemics” with the Soviet press.

Wick appointed as director of VOA his good friend James B. Conkling, who had been head of Columbia Records, founded Warner Brothers Records, arranged music for the Dorsey Brothers, and performed on tour with the King Sisters—one of whom he married. Nicolaides in turn was appointed (with recommendations from a few well-known conservatives) to his “deputy program director” position, beneath not only Conkling but also those foreign service officers, who must have rejoiced to see these rather elderly, PR-oriented, showbiz-steeped political appointees coming in the front door to supervise them. Wick and Conkling, like many other political appointees new in Washington, weren’t quite sure of the rules but were eager to keep everyone happy. They worried about what the *Washington Post* or Sen. Charles Percy might say (the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has jurisdiction over VOA); and so were often happy to transfer authority to those who knew the ropes better than they. The most important of these foreign service information officers were (and still are) Terrence Catherman, Conkling’s deputy, and John “Jock” Shirley, the counselor to the agency, who, according to Nico-

laides, “embodies the institutional memory of VOA.”

By the middle of 1981, then, Wick and Conkling had arrived, but were not yet fully aware of all that was going on around them. And the newsroom was publicizing America’s warts. For example, the second installment of a series on crime began: “Charles Silberman . . . once wrote that ‘crime is as American as Jesse James.’” There was a replay of a Tass News Agency report stating that “Mr. Reagan used false figures to describe a massive increase in Soviet spending. . . . Tass charged Reagan with ignoring the needs of America’s poor.” And a news item repeated, without rebuttal, the claim by an East German magazine that the West had advance notice of the construction of the Berlin Wall.

Meanwhile, some of the “émigrés” in the foreign language division were amazed to find that they were having difficulty getting Alexandr Solzhenitsyn on the air. Ludmilla Foster, who came to the U.S. from the Soviet Union in 1950, and has been with the Voice for eight years, included an excerpt from Solzhenitsyn’s new book *October 1916* on a weekly book program she edits. This was scheduled to be repeated twice, but Foster’s superior, a foreign service information officer, ordered the repeats taken off the air.

According to an ICA memorandum not hitherto published, Charles Wick suggested at a VOA conference on July 31 that Solzhenitsyn be invited to broadcast regularly on the Voice. His suggestion “was strongly objected to” on the grounds that “Solzhenitsyn is considered a traitor for having broken ranks in a regimented society by the slavish majority of Soviet listeners to the Voice, that he engages in an objectionable form of Russian nationalism, and that he is very unpopular except with a small group of intellectuals.” Over lunch with Nicolaides, Terrence Catherman “vigorously defended the ‘spiking’ of Solzhenitsyn.” In a slightly different vein, Catherman told *U.S. News & World Report* that the Soviet Union “is smart enough to know it is going with the tides of history,” adding,

“We lost Europe a long time ago—with Vietnam, Cambodia and Watergate.” In the aftermath of martial law in Poland, he added, “we are trying to do nothing that might exacerbate tensions.”

Shortly after he arrived at VOA Nicolaides had been told not to use the phrase “Iron Curtain,” and when he wanted to dub General Jaruzelski’s regime a “military junta,” he was told to remove the phrase from the script because it was nothing but “buzz words and name calling.” (The Board for International Broadcasting, which oversees Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe, observes similar etiquette. A year after President Reagan took office the board was still instructing broadcasters to “avoid obsolete terminology” such as “communist bloc” and “capitalism vs. communism.”) An

Voice from the Voice

Gene Pell, director of news operations for the Voice of America, heatedly objected to a recent item in this column saying that the VOA charter had been moved from a conspicuous spot in the agency’s newsroom and replaced by a photo of Ronald Reagan to coincide with the President’s visit there.

“The charter fell off the wall about a year ago,” said Mr. Pell. “Its absence was not noticed. Before the President arrived, the charter was dug out of the closet, dusted off and rehung. Not in an inconspicuous place.”

From The New York Times, March 1, 1982. By Francis X. Clines and Bernard Weinraub.

unwritten rule at VOA is not to broadcast anything that is more than mildly critical of Lenin because (as someone in the foreign language services put it) “he is supposedly so revered in Russia that criticizing him would be offensive and VOA would lose credibility.”

So, as it turned out, criticizing Lenin and broadcasting Solzhenitsyn would have the same drawback: both would undermine VOA’s credibility. In order to strengthen VOA credibility, criticism of the U.S. was to be unfettered (Watergate), while

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criticism of the Soviet Union was to be shunned (Lenin). With warts showing and VOA thereby credible, American prestige was no doubt soaring throughout the world.

NEVERTHELESS, alert figures in the newsroom noticed that political storm clouds were brewing on the horizon. Once again (it had happened before) there was a distinct possibility that the new administration would try to "politicize" VOA and thereby undo all those years of carefully accumulated credibility.

On August 20, 1981, the U.S. embassy in Geneva complained that VOA had described the Afghans fighting Soviet troops as "anti-government guerrillas." And someone (rumored to be Richard Allen, then at the National Security Council) had called Conkling and suggested that the Afghans be called "freedom fighters."

Political interference like that was pretty worrying to those who took their First Amendment rights seriously. Even more frightening, McCarthyism was in the air. VOA had transmitted to the Soviet Union an interview with a leading Soviet spokesman, Georgii Arbatov, the head of the Moscow-based Institute for the Study of the U.S.A. and Canada. Arbatov (and the Soviet press attaché in Washington, who was interviewed at the same time) rebutted some "provocative" Reagan statements about the Soviet Union. There was nothing unusual about that. Arbatov had frequently appeared on network television, and if he was "news" to CBS, why couldn't he be news to VOA?

The U.S. embassy in Moscow complained to the National Security Council, and Richard Allen phoned Conkling to complain. Seemingly in all innocence, Conkling tried to find out who put Arbatov on the air. So the newsroom professionals, sensing that their independence and integrity were at stake, organized a little counterattack. Mark Willen, a VOA correspondent who had been with the agency for thirteen years, arranged to interview Conkling for

a mimeographed in-house newsletter called *News Room*, and showed up at Conkling's office, tape recorder in hand, on September 4, 1981.

"I thought I'd start on a somewhat philosophical note," Willen began blandly, "and maybe ask you simply—why are we here? As you look at VOA, what do you see as our main reason for being in existence? What's our principal purpose?"

Conkling, who had been at VOA for three months, could have returned the ball neatly to Willen's court by reading back VOA's charter in all its high-minded vagueness. Instead, he chose to stroll into the minefield that surrounded him.

"That's a really interesting question," he began, "because for two days now I have been in conversations trying to see if I could determine exactly what our purpose is. We have a purpose—to reach as many people as we can in the world—but the question is what do we reach them with and what are we intending to gain by reaching them?"

He wandered on in this vein for a while, sometimes coming perilously close to suggestions that might "politicize" the agency—for instance, that "we want to inform the world of what it is about this country that makes this a country we happen to love..." But he redeemed himself by adding: "We don't make enemies... we don't do things offensively that will make enemies of the people out there... I don't know if we're addressing our goals right. Because I don't know exactly what our goals are."

"One thing that upset people," Willen said, nudging Conkling back into a dangerous position, "was the request that came from this office for the names of people who had worked that day [on the Arbatov broadcast]. However it was meant, it was interpreted as something of a threat. Do you want to comment on that?"

Conkling now stood implicitly accused of McCarthyism, one of the graver modern-day offenses.

"Yes," confessed Conkling. "I asked Cliff [Groce], who was involved. Cliff came in and said, 'I

wish you wouldn't ask me that question, because it sounds very much like the McCarthy era.' I said, 'Okay, I won't ask you that question.' It bothered me that he said that because I guess I am as strong as anyone against the McCarthy era."

"Are you finding this job to be what you expected?" Willen then inquired. "Are you enjoying it?"

"I didn't seek the job," Conkling replied, on the defensive and apparently demoralized. "In fact, I never in the world thought I'd accept the job... Charlie Wick called me. I've known him for thirty-five years... He said, 'Would you be interested in VOA?' I said, 'No, but I'll bring you some names.' He said, 'Would you think about it?' And I figured to myself, 'It's hard to say I shouldn't think about it.' So I said, 'I will, and I'll tell you in ten days, but I'm sure the answer will be no.'"

"I thought about it and I thought about it. I finally came to the conclusion, how could I say no to it? It was a matter of conscience at that point. I had done a lot of things. I'd been very fortunate. Maybe I owed the country something. That's kind of what it got to be with me. So I got to the point where I couldn't say no, so I said yes."

A COUPLE of days after the Conkling interview appeared in *News Room*, (some references to it had popped up in the *Baltimore Sun*), Gilbert Robinson, Wick's deputy at ICA, asked Nicolaides to give Conkling some suggestions as to how he might fend off the criticism that was stirring in the agency. So it was that Nicolaides reached for his typewriter and began his memo.

He pointed out that a professor at Tufts had called government broadcasting "public diplomacy." But Nicolaides was scornful of the phrase, and here he made a grave rhetorical error, violating Washington's all-important linguistic etiquette. The Tufts professor, he went on, "was looking for a bland, sanitized substitute for *propaganda*, a word that had fallen into disrepute because of its most gifted prac-

tioners had put it to the service of odious ideologies."

"We are," he added, "as all the world understands, a propaganda agency. Propaganda is a species of the genus *advertising*: i.e., advertising in the service of a government..." In the next paragraph Nicolaides asked Conkling to take up the challenge of defying the whole newsroom. "Since the word *propaganda* still suffers from negative connotations," he went on, "let's agree that the generally acceptable substitute is *information*. But let's not let this lead us down another path to confusion: the view that the USIA/USICA (including and especially VOA) is a 'newsgathering and disseminating' agency—essentially a journalistic enterprise of some sort. This particular tilt may have come from the prominence of celebrated journalists (Morrow, Chancellor, Rowan) in the agency's history."

From there it was but a short step to concluding that we should "counter" the Soviet Union's "broadcast barrage." "Merely refuting Soviet canards is not enough," he wrote. "We too must have an overall theme. We must portray the Soviet Union as the last great predatory empire on earth, remorselessly enslaving its own diverse ethnic populations, crushing the legitimate aspirations of its captive nations.... We must strive to 'destabilize' the Soviet Union and its satellites by promoting disaffection between peoples and rulers."

He concluded: "And when we finally get to the point that the only criticism of the VOA is howling from the Kremlin, antiphonal ululation from the U.S. hard left, and even greater Soviet efforts at jamming, we can crack open the champagne!"

On September 25, four days after the date of the memo, Conkling told Nicolaides that he had liked the memo, but that he should prepare a condensed, three-page version of it "because no one at this agency reads long memos." But someone was reading it.

Although Nicolaides had been appointed to VOA at the time he wrote the memo, his formal position had

not yet been announced, or even decided. It wasn't until November 10 that a USICA press release announced his appointment as deputy director for commentary and analysis. At the same time, Terrence Catherman was formally appointed deputy director of VOA.

Two days later some preliminary throat clearing was heard in the *Washington Post*, and, on the third day, there was the bad dream—the memo-on-page-one—just as Nicolaides had warned his campaign workers.

PROPAGANDA ROLE URGED FOR
VOICE OF AMERICA
by Murrey Marder

The Voice of America should function as a "propaganda agency," comparable to an advertising agency selling soap, and it should portray the Soviet Union as "the last great predatory empire on earth," in the judgment of a new deputy program director for the overseas broadcasting agency....

On it went for a thousand words, and within hours it had been picked up and amplified by the news media echo chamber. An AP story that morning began: "The head of VOA said Friday he will not let the radio operation become an instrument for propaganda, but he said he will not fire a key official who said VOA should be exactly that."

Editorials and headlines blossomed. It was reported on VOA's airwaves that "the sentiments expressed in the memo have been disavowed by the director of VOA."

Soon enough the ululation became antiphonal, with a Radio Moscow broadcast citing "the prominent Washington observer Murrey Marder." The Soviet commentator quoted admiringly from the *Post*, adding that "some of his [Wick's] new subordinates, according to America's *Newsweek*, are angry that the man now at the wheel of the U.S. propaganda vehicle wants to take it back to Truman's day," to the slogan 'America is the greatest,' and all the rhetoric of the Cold War."

According to the warts-and-all theory, the Soviets might have been expected to wink at the new "McCarthyism," because it would pre-

sumably undermine VOA credibility. In fact, it was becoming hard to tell who disapproved of McCarthyism most: Soviet journalists in Moscow, or American journalists in Washington.

After his appointment was announced in November, Nicolaides was moved to an out-of-the-way office tucked behind workmen with hammers and ladders. He had no secretary, no assistant, no writers. No scripts were cleared with him, and of his own scripts, all but one were rejected by VOA's policy officer, Jack Harrod, as being "too strongly worded." His commentary on martial law in Poland, for example, which contained the phrase "tanks and bayonets," was considered too hot to handle. Nicolaides was instructed to talk to no one in the news media, and to turn down all invitations to speak in public. He was still on the payroll, but that was it. Outside his office, unknown pin-striped staffers headed off down distant corridors to mysterious meetings, but he was not invited. He put a sign on his door: GORKY (the name of the Russian town to which Andrei Sakharov had been exiled).



AS THE internal battle at VOA became more heated, a petition was circulated and signed in the newsroom, expressing "outrage" at Nicolaides's proposals, and demanding that his appointment be revoked. In response, about 200 of the "émigrés" signed a counterpetition, and a score of them delivered it to the office of James Conkling, who by this time might well have been looking back nostalgically on his touring days with the King Sisters.

"We are shocked," part of the émigré petition read, "that VOA's media informers are 'distressed' that VOA should want to 'draw a rosy picture of the United States.' As federal employees, we owe it to the taxpayers who provide our salaries to put American life in perspective. If in the course of doing so the U.S. image turns out to be positive—what's wrong with that?"

Unlike the émigrés, who were

usually afraid to speak for attribution, and even tended to fear their phones might be tapped, newsroom people were blithely outspoken in their criticism of the new administration. Philomena Jurey, VOA's White House correspondent and a twenty-year veteran with the agency, publicly accused Charles Wick of "besmirching our newsroom," and Mark Willen was soon on the record with a complaint that being asked to call Afghans "freedom fighters" constituted "interference in our ability to report the news objectively." Later on Willen got into trouble when a "News Roundup" he edited led off with the sentence: "The head of the largest U.S. civil rights organization has accused the Reagan administration of a criminal and racist act." (Benjamin Hooks had not used the word "criminal.") Shortly after that Willen was transferred to New Delhi. No doubt Konkling had not forgotten their interview. "I think the VOA is slowly but surely being destroyed," Willen said to a journalist after he heard the New Delhi news.

Such comments within VOA elicited a harmonious hum from the press across the country. Editorials and features complained that VOA was being "politicized," "McCarthyism" was in the air, the agency's credibility was being threatened, and propaganda was the new order of the day. Less attention was paid to a comment by Catherman in the January 11, 1982, issue of the *National Journal*, in which he said that "what the Reagan Administration is doing is 'not a revolution.'" Catherman predicted "no major change one way or another" in programming.

The quarantined Nicolaides soon became restless in "Gorky." He complained to Konkling, who said to him (ominously, Nicolaides thought), "I understand, you're upset. Why not take a week off?" Nicolaides fired off two more memos to Wick and on January 12 was invited to a meeting with Wick and Konkling.

Nicolaides said it seemed clear that they must have no confidence in him. His views, he thought, corresponded to those of the president,

the administration, and Wick himself. Yet it seemed they were content to keep him hidden away in a closet. No, no, no, said Wick, that wasn't it at all. "What we lack confidence in is this American press." Specifically, Wick worried what the press might make of further public pronouncements by Nicolaides. He conceded that Nicolaides had now been "put on ice," but he had delegated control of VOA to Konkling and wasn't going to overrule him at this stage. Wick thought that Nicolaides was "a good guy and a good writer," however, so he would try to find something else for him in another corner of the administration. And so it was that Nicolaides's career at the Voice of America came to an end.

Within a couple of days there was a brief story in the *Washington Post* saying that Nicolaides had been removed from his sensitive post, and a few days after that an antipathonal notice appeared in *Izvestia*. Still grimly underlining items in the For-

eign Broadcast Information Service, still in Gorky, but now awaiting his transfer, Nicolaides one day came across the following feature by V. Popov and A. Sychev:

According to a report in the American newspaper the Washington Post, P. Nikolaides, the leader of VOA's commentary desk, who is notorious for his hysterical calls for "psychological warfare" against the socialist countries to be toughened, will shortly leave his post.

Nikolaides... in making his many shrill and provocative statements, has—without actually wanting to—demonstrated the true unsavory goals of American propaganda: he openly declared he intended to engage in ideological subversion.

In the nick of time, however, the Voice of America rid itself of this dangerous and provocative man, and so managed to salvage its objectivity, professionalism, and credibility around the world. □



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LETTER FROM ABROAD



Steve Wilcox

DON'T BE A BOER

by Geoffrey Wheatcroft

Opposition to apartheid involves class snobbery as much as racial goodwill.

THERE ARE TWO anniversaries in South Africa this year. Eighty years ago, on May 31, 1902, the Peace of Vereeniging ended the Boer War. Some of the Boer delegates came away in tears; some smashed their rifles on the rocks. To Afrikaners the Boer War is the Second War of Independence.

The first (and successful) war was in 1881, more than forty years after the Boers had trekked north from the Cape across the Orange and Vaal rivers to get away from the
Geoffrey Wheatcroft writes for The Spectator of London.

British and to found their independent Boer ("farmer") republics. The British government absorbed the Transvaal in the 1870s, but the Boers won back their independence at the battle of Majuba. Then, eighteen years later, after the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand had transformed the economy of the South African Republic, war began again, in the autumn of 1899.

The Boer War was world famous. Few wars have ever excited such passionate interest and such condemnation of one side—the British—in other countries. In particular—fine historical irony—liberals, rad-

icals, and socialists everywhere were united in their support of the Boers, the Afrikaner nationalists. According to progressive opinion, the Boers were brave freedom fighters against capitalist imperialism—which indeed they were, among other things. Few thoughts were spared then for the black majority within South Africa.

Less well known outside South Africa is the Rand Revolt of sixty years ago. It began as a miners' strike and had its roots in the labor system in the gold mines. From the beginning, when the great gold reef was found in 1886, there were two sorts of miners in the Rand mines. There still are. Most were black, illiterate and monoglot tribesmen induced by a variety of means to leave their homelands and come to the mines as contract laborers. Some came from within the borders of what is now South Africa but many came from without, notably from Portuguese Mozambique. They lived in enclosed barracks or compounds, were fed a mixture of mealie porridge (stewed maize) and offal, and returned home at the end of their period of service with whatever money they had saved.

And there was, as there still is today, a minority of white miners who ostensibly did the skilled work. Their special responsibility was blasting. A mine is created by sinking shafts and boring tunnels. Then "stopes" are cut, narrow passages leading through the gold-bearing reef, a thin layer—imagine one page in the telephone book—which has to be extracted. Holes are drilled in the rock face, explosive charges are laid and blasted (the skilled part), and the ore rubble is cleared for milling. The whites lived the life of independent workmen and were paid cash wages as much as ten times higher than the blacks.

The economic history of gold mining in the Transvaal was governed by two facts, one financial, one geological. The financial fact was the gold standard. Until the Great War, the price of gold was fixed at eighty-five shillings sterling an ounce (\$21.60 in 1914). The geological fact is the nature of the

Witwatersrand reef. It is by far the largest gold deposit in the world, but of very low-quality ore compared with that of North American or Australian reefs. A ton of the best ore on the Rand pays only a few ounces of gold. In the telephone-book simile the gold itself would be the commas on one page of the book. So the mines must be highly labor-intensive. When the price of their product was fixed there was fierce pressure on the mining companies to control costs as the only way to maximize profits. The wages of black miners were often cut. And the companies were constantly tempted to increase the proportion of cheap black to expensive white labor.

At the end of 1921, the white miners were told that their numbers were to be reduced in the new year and their wages cut. In January the miners came out on strike. A few of them had felt the influence of the October Revolution, and the mining companies saw Bolshevism everywhere: "A calculated design to repeat on the Rand the unnatural outbreak of crime in Russia that horrified the entire world." In fact, the miners had only dabbed a touch of red onto their traditional grievance to produce the memorable slogan: "Workers of the world, unite and fight for a white South Africa."

Before long there was violence. On the last day of February three miners were killed and the strike turned into an armed rising. In the early days of the Rand mines, the white miners had been "outlanders," Cornishmen and Welshmen, Americans and Australians. But land hunger before the Boer War, and then war itself, had driven many Afrikaners into the cities; by 1922 they were the majority of white miners. They adopted the old Boer military formation of the commando, a column of mounted men. These commandos fought pitched battles with police and army. The prime minister of South Africa, Jan Smuts, had also learned to fight in the Boer War. He directed the whole armory of modern warfare—machine guns, tanks, bomber aircraft—against the miners. Although the revolt came

near to capturing Johannesburg, it was finally defeated by overwhelming force.

More than two hundred people had been killed, soldiers, strikers, and innocent bystanders, including blacks. Most blacks had wisely kept out of the way, but those whom the strikers encountered were likely to be beaten up and killed. The surviving miners' leaders were arrested. Many were tried, some were condemned, a few executed. Taffy Long and two of his comrades walked to the gallows singing "The Red Flag."

THE MINERS had been defeated, like the Boers twenty years before. But not for good. Both victories were Pyrrhic, both defeats deceptive. The Boers lost the war but won the peace. Vereeniging was followed by the Union of 1910, when the two former Boer republics joined the two former British colonies, the Cape and Natal, in a unified country—not a federation as was wanted by some, and surely they were right. From the beginning the Union of South Africa was dominated by the worst traditions on both sides: English financial rapacity and Afrikaner racism.

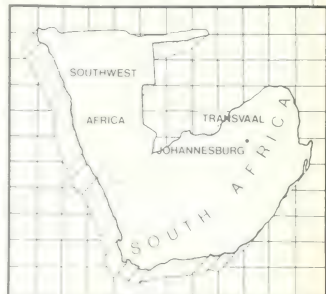
Those in England who had opposed the war idealized the Boers, recognizing their patriotic fierceness and bravery but ignoring the fact that the Boers were also fighting to continue their traditional and unlovely treatment of the blacks. An English historian has said, however, that the real question at stake in 1899 was not whether the Boer republics had any moral purpose but whether the British Empire did.

The British claimed to have the interests of the blacks at heart. But this was humbug, as radicals saw at the time. The war was fought to make the Transvaal safe for the gold-mining companies, which were not philanthropic organizations. The blacks were deceived by British propaganda. When Pretoria was taken from the Boers in 1900, blacks thought that the jubilee had come, and they burned their passbooks in the streets. The British army pun-

ished them severely for this indiscipline, and all blacks in South Africa still carry the hated *dompas*.

The British had said that they would extend the Cape franchise, in theory color-blind, throughout South Africa. But this was never meant seriously. At Union the Boers not only kept their racial constitutions but prepared the way for the events of the 1950s, when the old franchise was abolished in the Cape also. Any further doubts about the nature of Union disappeared in 1913, with the legislation known as the Natives Land Act. No more discriminatory law has ever been passed in South Africa. It granted the blacks, at least three-quarters of the population, just 13 percent of the land. This legislation destroyed any hope of an independent peasant economy and incidentally (but not accidentally) ensured that blacks would always be driven to seek cash employment in the mines.

After 1922 the white miners also won the peace. At the election of 1924, Smuts was defeated by a coalition of Nationalists and Labor. He later returned to office, but lost again in 1948. The same coalition of Afrikaner nationalism and the white working class has ruled South



Africa ever since. In the 1920s the "Pact" government began the work of systematic apartheid that has defined modern South Africa. Not only was there an industrial color bar and job reservation—they had existed before—but large schemes of protection existed for poor whites, more or less guaranteeing them feather-bedded jobs in state-owned concerns. Today, if a liberal-minded

visitor to South Africa succumbs to racist prejudice it is likely to be irritation with the poor, and not always bright, Afrikaners employed by the post office, the police, and the railroads.

QUESTIONS of race and class have been interwoven throughout South Africa's history. Today they produce the apparent paradox by which the liberals or even the "left wing" in South African politics, the Progressive Federal Party, are supported by the rich, while the "right-wing" National Party is supported by the (white) poor, who are those most eager to maintain apartheid. Evelyn Waugh remarked, on a visit to the country some twenty years ago, "Here as in England the champions of the colour bar are the classes whose modest skills many negroes can master."

The whole history of the race struggle in the mines before and after 1922 has turned on the matter of blasting. But as long ago as 1907 a mine owner giving evidence at a public inquiry said that "some of the kaffirs [blacks] are better machinists than some of the white men...[they can]...do everything that a white man can do, but of course we are not allowed to let them blast." In fact, as everyone who knows the mines knows, blacks blast all the time, while their white boss sits out of the way (blasting is potentially dangerous as well as tricky). That truth would be vehemently denied by the white Mineworkers' Union. The Union's journal, *Die Mynwerker*, exemplifies the attitudes of the white working class. Its enemies are the blacks, who threaten, as they have always threatened, to undercut "skilled" white labor, and the mining companies. For decades the stock figure in Afrikaner nationalist and poor-white propaganda was "Hoggenheimer." He appeared in cartoons as a greedy, brutal, and of course hook-nosed capitalist, grinding the faces of the poor. Nowadays the Mineworkers' Union directly attacks Mr. Harry Oppenheimer and his Anglo-Amer-

ican Corporation (by far the biggest business group in South Africa)—or, the "Advancement of Africans Corporation," as *Die Mynwerker* calls it whenever Anglo tries to move black workers into skilled jobs. Few issues of the paper are complete without a reference to 1922.

It is easy to despise those white workers. Contempt for them unites the South African rich with neo-Marxists (who like to argue, using some degree of ingenuity, that there is no white working class in South Africa). It is easy to hate the Boers. They are the object of instinctive condemnation now as they were eighty years ago. Only then it was Jingo Tories in England who abused them ("killing Kruger with your mouths"); now it is the liberal left everywhere, killing Botha with their mouths. Because of the intermix of race and class it is gratifyingly easy to look down on the Afrikaners out of snobbery but to dress it up with moral disapprobation. Anyone who has ever dined in the soigné English-speaking suburbs of north Johannesburg will know how strong anti-Afrikaner ethnic and social prejudice still is.

Of course, the white liberals are right about apartheid. It is not pleasant to watch the way an Afrikaner plumber or electrician behaves toward the black servants in a house he is visiting. And yet Afrikaner racism and the whole tradition of narrow, theocratic white supremacy, since 1948, have provided a marvelous excuse by which the complex of liberal society, business, and press in South Africa can absolve itself of complicity with the Nationalist regime—can even go so far as to argue that by its very existence it works against apartheid: "Capitalism is color-blind," the phrase goes. Try telling them that in a West Rand mine.

NOWADAYS, business certainly does need the expanding skilled black working class—expanding and skilled despite the best efforts of the white unions—and it also needs the black consumers who have turned

downtown Johannesburg into almost as much of an African city as Nairobi. But you don't have to be a Marxist to see that the South African racial system is not a sudden aberration. It may not be quite the case that white supremacy was conditioned by economic forces. It is certainly true that the mines could never have been developed, and South Africa's prosperity with them, without the labor of blacks who were almost enslaved. The mining companies may have needed skilled white labor and European capital, but never as much as they needed the blacks. This was half consciously recognized in the days when the London stock market knew South African gold-mining shares generically as "kaffirs."

In the end, those final triumphs of the Boers and the white miners will themselves prove Pyrrhic. White supremacy cannot last forever (although they make a mistake who think that the Nationalist regime has no more life left in it). The blacks will have their Boer War and their 1922, too. This is happening already. Two different, although related, processes are in train. On the economic front, black workers are organizing as white workers did before them. The force of black unionism is already powerful and can only grow stronger: workers of the world, unite and fight for a black South Africa?

Politically, also, the blacks are learning from history. The story of the Boer military and political victories is not much regarded or admired outside Afrikaanderdom. But it is by the blacks. One founder of the Black Consciousness movement in South Africa was a keen student of Afrikaner nationalism, even to the point of admiring the speeches of Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd. And Mr. Gatsha Buthelezi, the leader of Inkatha, often says that his people must remember the Boer struggle for national freedom and learn from it. It may be that the South Africa of the future, in whatever shape it emerges, will be a place of honored memory for the Boer victories against England, and even for the battles of 1922. □



CONTRA REAGANUM

by Nicholas von Hoffman

AS THE United States is the last large society in the democratic West to freight a big religious population, it is meet and just that God has vouchsafed an answer to the prayers of the American faithful. After imprecation, supplication, and entreaty, the God of Good Things, of collection boxes and mailing lists, of holidays high and low, civic and patriotic, the God of radio and television, of the dollar bill and free choice, the God who reigneth over grassy golf course and befountained shopping center, God who recordeth the name and number of all who dial-a-prayer, God who annointeth the leading economic indicators and reproveth the lagging ones, the God of interest rates and laissez-faire and the balanced budget, God, Supreme Commander in Chief of the forces of freedom, atomic and conventional, God the Omnipotent Monothete whose grace penetrates the trade barriers of Shintoist Japan, our God, God of Twin Oaks and Tuxedo Park, God of the congressional prayer breakfast, this divinity has heard the cries of a pious people. He has granted us what we have asked for: an honest man in the White House.



OUR MOST dangerous president came clothed in the civic and political virtues we demand from our public men and seldom get. No one thought it would be the movie actor who would double-cross the nation by taking his own campaign promises seriously and consecrating himself to carrying them out. An overpromised electorate did not know that this candidate was the real thing, the Molièresque madman who would create plot, dramatic tension, and such denouement

Nicholas von Hoffman's most recent book is Make-Believe Presidents: The Illusion of Power from McKinley to Carter, published by Pantheon.

as you've never seen by being to his own self true. The newspapers and the television let us down, led us to believe that, *au fond*, on the bottom line, Ronald Reagan was a flexible, realistic, pragmatic, reasonable, and practical fellow—when, truth to tell, we have before us a stone fanatic.

Fanatics aren't thought to be flexible, pragmatic, and reasonable, yet Reagan is and so was Lenin. One step backward, two steps forward, retreat, sidle out of harm's way until a better day, that's the tactical waltz of men who are forced to wait their time and know what to do with power when they get it.

For Americans, however, the archetypal fanatic

is Adolf Hitler, the dancing, ranting maniac emitting noise and saliva flecks, screaming into the field telephone, "Not one bootstep backward from Stalingrad. Stand where you are and die for Führer and Faterland!" If you don't see anybody looking like that living in the White House, we thought, you don't have to worry. It was the military dictator, the fascist, the invasion of the commie body snatchers we were schooled to guard against. Nobody prophesied a true believer in a sports coat with too much shoulder padding and a sheepish smile.

Americans have mistaken Ronald Reagan for a mainline politician. It didn't occur to us who Ronald Reagan was, because the man didn't shout and thump the lectern, because the man smiled and spoke in a honeyed baritone. It didn't strike us that our ideologue wouldn't come in a brown shirt propounding ideas smelling of boiled cabbage or wiener schnitzel, trying to mix apple pie and fascism or hot dogs and collectivism. The American ideologue would come as Lincoln had come before, dressed in the raiment of our culture, a cartoon exaggeration of ourselves. He would be the boy next door grown old, the kid who got through college on an athletic scholarship, a Hollywood media hero, modest and patient, the early twentieth-century small-town equivalent of Father Abraham in his log cabin. Abe split rails and Ron broadcast for the Chicago Cubs.

L ENIN AND HITLER were their own prophets: they foretold themselves, founded their political parties, shaped the ideologies associated with their names. Ronald Reagan did nothing of the sort. He was recruited into his political faith, catechized by his father-in-law and the schmancy friends Nancy Fancy introduced him to. In this respect, also, Reagan resembles Lincoln, the only president he can be compared to as a minority party ideologue in the White House.

This is not to say that Reagan and Lincoln represent many values in common. Lincoln freed the slaves and Reagan thinks affirmative action should be recruiting a white superstar to take Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's place on the Los Angeles Lakers. Nevertheless, the two men are the only presidents since Buchanan's time, if not Jackson's, who came to office as the spokesmen for an ideology, a bundled set of principles upheld and asserted by a political organization founded on those principles and kept together by shared faith in them.

Though nominally the two men share a political party, Lincoln's Republican faith is the diametric opposite of Reagan's. Lincoln's was the voice of industrial America coming to be; his was the nation-building party. Reagan's party represents a disinterested and demeaned Jeffersonianism, an angry and selfish anachronism using the catchwords and cultural material from the Fourth of Julys of long ago

to disguise reaction and racism in flags and music and bunting.

Lincoln was the apostle of centralized authority of Washington, of the Union's supremacy, whereas Reagan and his cohorts are inching, worming, and squirming backward toward state sovereignty. Reagan's New Federalism is tearing up the paper Le was made to sign at Appomattox. The finishing of the symbol of power on the Potomac, the dome of the Capitol, so long delayed by gelatinous Jeffersonian politicians who mistrusted the government in which they served, was completed by the Lincoln administration in 1863. The Reagan administration aims to pull the pillars and send the dome rolling down Capitol Hill into the cast-iron and glass congressional greenhouses at the bottom. Where the Lincoln administration passed the first bills granting major federal aid to education, the Reagan administration would end them. Where the Lincoln administration invested in building the railroads, the Reagan administration would end expenditures for what they used to call national improvements.

Nevertheless, there are political and organizational similarities in the way these two presidents came to power. They were candidates not of the customary consensus politics of fuzzily defined political parties but of concise ideological factions buttressed by theoreticians and apologists and directed by fervid faith and clearly thought out intentions.

Ordinarily our presidential candidates don't differ much. Same genus, same species, they capture and use the legal structures of their political parties the way hermit crabs move in and use any unoccupied shell. The shells are more or less alike, one will do as well as another. Richard Nixon, with minor adjustments in emphasis, could have been a Democrat. Franklin Roosevelt represented not a break with Herbert Hoover, but an extension of his policies and tendencies. Roosevelt went further than Hoover approved of; but as Hoover himself at one point almost became a Wilsonian Democrat, so also Franklin Roosevelt, judged by what he was advocating in the early 1930s, could have been a Hoover Republican. With our two political parties ordinarily suctioned together tummy to tummy, like two tang dancers, the norm of presidential succession is continuity.

From time to time, one party or the other has been temporarily captured by an ideological faction such as the Democrats under Bryan in 1896 or the Republicans under Goldwater in 1964. Then the electorate has reacted in fright at perceived radicalism, because it might disturb the established pattern for distributing bonbons or rearrange the structure of the prevailing political capitalism. Radicals don't get elected. But Ronald Reagan did, because he and his managers tricked us into seeing him as a middle-of-the-road politician, albeit a unique variant of one and because, fed up and angered at the incompetent vacuities of Carterism, we tricked ourselves by lis-

ening to Reagan with a selective ear.

The record was there for us to read, if we had wanted to read it. Ronald Reagan didn't hop out of his bunny suit to reveal himself as a hard-core reactionary in the first hours after he took the oath of office. He's been saying what he says now for years. We haven't been listening.

As far back as October 1975, he was sketching out his New Federalism, suggesting that \$90 billion worth of federal programs be given over to the states. "What I propose is nothing less than a systematic transfer of authority and resources to the states—a program of creative federalism. . . . Federal authority has clearly failed to do the job. Indeed, it has created more problems in welfare, education, housing, food stamps, Medicaid, community development and revenue sharing, to name a few."

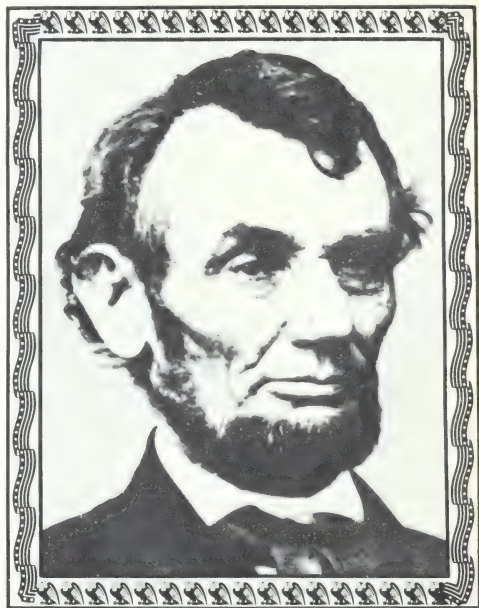
By January of the next year, he was running for the nomination and from the stink his proposal for the \$90 billion cut was causing him. Then, like David Stockman testifying before Congress, he took it back with his toes crossed, declaring, "I never did pay any attention to that list. That was just some stuff the economists gave me. I didn't even agree with all the things on that list." Now there he was ying, but, quintessentially, he's a truth-teller because he's a true believer, and true believers don't want to dissemble; they want to preach and convert, not conceal and manipulate. So by 1978, he was again going about saying he favored an "orderly, planned transfer of functions to the states." He repeated the idea in more general terms in his acceptance speech to the Republican National Convention. But millions of us who were watching heard what we picked out to hear.

Authoritative voices warned us, the loudest being that of the discredited, nasty nebbish James Earl Carter, Jr., he of the persnickety smile and the droning detail, he with the heart as full of guile as of Jesus. We were not going to listen to that slack-jawed, droopy-assed, bent-kneed politician when he warned us that the guy with the aw-shucks smile is an atomic-bomb thrower. Nor were we going to dig it out for ourselves, which we might have done by consulting the man's 1965 autobiography, in which he has this to say of the anti-nukers of seventeen years ago: "The trouble with such men is that they have never lived either on their feet or their knees. They have lived on their fat fannies."

NOT CARING to know what Reagan has consistently said throughout thirty years of politics is but one of the ways we have devised to deny to ourselves that—smile, boyish shrug of the shoulders, and all—this is a harsh and dangerous man. Instead of accepting that in this instance, at least, a very tough guy has come in a pretty package, we delude ourselves by thinking he is the harmlessly vapid male lead of the mov-

ie parts he once played. Instead of seeing that this is a mean son of a bitch who can countenance 10 million out of work and out of unemployment compensation to satisfy the punishing theories of the reactionary right, we have been off at the Bijou, snickering at the midnight showing of *Bedtime for Bonzo*. We've been like the daffy soap-opera devotees we patronize for confusing the actor with the role. We can't stop ourselves from looking down at him as an empty performer before the movie cameras. A third-rate actor, perhaps, but Ronald Reagan found his vocation in his thirties when he got active in the Screen Actors Guild and was intoxicated by politics. By most accounts, politics so obliterated other interests and obligations that his first wife, Jane Wyman, threw him out of the house. Whatever else he may be, Ronald Reagan isn't a political amateur, an accidental figure. By persisting in thinking of him as a vacuous dabbler, we make it easy for him by underestimating him.

We are encouraged to underestimate him the more because we think he's weak on his civics, that he gets his facts wrong. Actually he gets *our* facts wrong; he gets *his* facts right. When he asserts at a press conference that there were once two separate nations, one North and one South Vietnam, he's getting our facts wrong, not his. In the social and political circles he's lived in for the last three decades, there were two nations, one of which invaded the other. It is a fact.



What we call the errors, mistakes, and inaccuracies that come out of Ronald Reagan's mouth are of a pattern conforming to the reactionary view of the world's geography. That's why, whether it's Vietnam or some inane tale of \$100,000-a-year families getting food stamps, whenever he gets called on one, it is pulled back, the names are changed, and it is spoken again. For the ideologue, facts are what you believe are facts. Reagan, like a hard-core Marxist-Leninist, holds no brief for bourgeois objectivity. People like you and me have a different standard for what truth is, and how it is tested, from that of people like Ronald Reagan. Get someone to take you to a Saturday-night party at the country club, and you'll meet a lot more who believe as the president does.

When Ronald Reagan is scorned as unread, ill informed, and uninformed, it is but another way of underestimating and dismissing him. He is informed for his purposes, not ours. He has no need to cultivate the open-mindedness that is disciplined by fact and renewed by novel hypothesis. To the contrary, such a mentality would be a paralyzing impediment. We are dealing with a man who knows what he wants to do, who is not weighing alternatives in the balance, who wants or needs no additional information before making up his mind. Ronald Reagan made up his mind thirty years ago. Ever since, his sight and sound receptors have been set to block information that does not lend support to what he's determined to do. An unnerving mental configuration in a president; a common one in a true believer.

Living in a world of facts called into existence by ideological conviction, the true believer can proceed, confident that all his worst fears are true. If all revolutions attempted after 1776 are Marxist-Leninist, that's the kind of revolutions they are having in El Salvador and Nicaragua. But treat a government as though it is Marxist-Leninist, and that's what you'll turn it into. Among the drawbacks of having fanatics at the helm of state is that they make enemies where there were none.

PEOPLE mislead themselves about Ronald Reagan because they make excuses for him that they wouldn't make for another person, much less another president. Anyone else in public life, anyone less of a charmer, less able to swing his head from side to side with that "Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do" expression on his puss, anyone with a less amiable public persona, would have been recognized and categorized as a racist long since. With Reagan, who, after all, does not come to press conferences wearing a white hood and a sheet, we say he's "insensitive."

It would take more group therapy or sensitivity training than you'd care to pay for to turn this guy into something other than what he is, which is a

smooth-talking bigot. The succession of Amos 'n' Andys, Stepin Fetchits, and minstrel-show clowns he has appointed to high office, when he has appointed any blacks to high office, is no inexplicable deviation from a heretofore exemplary record on race. When Reagan was governor of California between 1966 and 1971, out of 3,709 appointments to new state jobs, nine went to blacks, according to one reckoning.

The excuse being offered for an identical record in Washington is that most blacks are Democrats and therefore politically ineligible for the spoils of federal patronage. The same thing was true for the Democrats when they came to power in 1932. A Negro Democrat in that period was a contradiction in terms. Nobody had ever seen or heard of one. To be black was to be Republican. But Roosevelt and his dispenser of patronage, Postmaster General James Farley, made black Democrats by giving them jobs. The difference is that they wanted blacks in their party and Ronald Reagan and his friends don't. He doesn't even want blacks to vote for him. (Remember how hard it is for the true believer to pretend, even when it's to his advantage.) Otherwise he would not have gone to Philadelphia, Mississippi—where the murderers of three civil-rights workers were caught only because the FBI was sent in over the objections of local authorities—there to tell the multitudes at the Neshoba County Fair, "I believe in states' rights."

It is as close as we need come to having a president endorse lynching and mob action. And don't forget the 1976 primary campaign, in which he toured the South, deploring the ease with which "young buck[s]" got "T-bone steaks" with their food stamps. Or this verbatim gem from a 1970 press conference:

A great deal of the problem in the whole so-called hunger problem in the country and certainly here in California is in many instances malnutrition, that is, the result of a lack of knowledge of proper nutritional diet and of ethnic eating patterns and habits. And the result is that you do have a malnutrition problem that is not in any way associated in some instances with need or with lack of funds. . . . There are certain localities in the country where the children themselves think a very tasty meal is bread with sorghum on it and because they like it and it is kind of customary and that's what they get and it is hardly what we call a balanced meal.

In other words, you'll get rickets and scurvy on a steady diet of watermelon and frijoles.

Whatever the private opinions of his predecessors, Ronald Reagan is the first public racist to hold his office since Woodrow Wilson, who fired black white-collar federal employees and resegregated government offices. Grumble, mumble, and delay as other presidents did, Reagan is the only one since Wilson to attempt to take away from blacks gains they have already secured. Where others may have said, this

s enough, no more for now, Reagan alone has undertaken a rollback. Always smiling, always covertly vicious, he has found out how to exploit poor programs, or the poor execution of good ones, to go for black people.

The courts may have driven the little yellow school buses down the road to *reductio ad absurdum*, but Reagan has not merely let the air out of their tires. He has replaced them with nothing, no program, no assistance to make sure that at last there is one generation of black children in the United States that gets a halfway-decent education. Ketchup is declared a vegetable in the school lunch program, college aid and money for vocational training are eliminated, and this in a period when the number of black students going to professional schools was declining before the Great Communicator was sworn in.

THAT these things are done in an atmosphere of swinish opulence should have helped liberals to rediscover who they are, but they are too cowed. The most effective political protest comes in the form of Johnny Carson's one-liners between imaginary golf swings. Nancy Fency isn't the first presidential wife to make a career of being a clothes horse. For tasteless, self-centered, mindlessly unaware conspicuous consumption, Jackie Kennedy matched Ronald Reagan's wife Givenchy for Givenchy. The Kennedys, however, knew how to cultivate the illusion that they were making a grand gesture, that they were giving out with a little noblesse oblige in Camelot, where the Grand Vizier would have nixed any proposal to pass out five-pound lumps of processed cheese to the poor. The Kennedys liked the poor because the poor admired them; it was out of the mouths of the poor that the deepest oohhhs! and aaaahhhs! came when the carriage rolled by. The Reagans don't like poor people; they see them as ugly, deformed, grasping, tricky, and ungrateful, revulsive objects on which to bestow tatty prizes: Velveeta cheese and pure white lard.

For blacks or *poverelli* of other hues, Reagan offers one program—his enterprise zones. These are inner-city economic free-fire areas where entrepreneurs are supposed to locate because they will be wholly unregulated. (The liberal approach is to offer tax incentives to locate new plants where the need for jobs is greatest, but since Reagan, with the help of many a Democratic congressional vote, has de facto abolished the corporation tax, there are no more incentives left to offer.) The only thing left in the larder to use as a lure is perfect business freedom, freedom from health regulations, freedom from fire and safety codes, freedom from the minimum wage—a return, in short, to the economic liberties that Theodore Roosevelt and an earlier generation of Republicans considered too monstrous to tolerate.

Eventually, under the doctrines of the Reagan

Reaction, everybody with a job is going to work in an enterprise zone. We are seeing a new vision arising: Coolie America, where even the white-collar masses will be forced to live by scrabble and snatch in a competition for work and wages unknown perhaps to all but the oldest of us. Never before has an incumbent administration attempted to stimulate unemployment, underemployment, and lower wages.

Consider what Reagan is doing simultaneously in a society that for a decade or more has already seen the "normal" unemployment rate move upward year after year until the acceptable level of joblessness has about doubled, from 3.5 to 7 percent. In this situation, Reagan has moved first to dump tens of thousands of government workers, federal, state, and local, off the payrolls. Undeniably, disgustingly large numbers of them were making no other contribution to the commonweal but spending their paychecks, thereby helping to maintain a healthy level of demand for goods and services. You can argue that one of the many ways Jimmy Carter opened the door to Reaganism was by failing in his promise to see that people on the public payroll did some approximation of seven and a half hours of work five times a week. Nevertheless, public employment, even if no more useful than as a disguised form of welfare for college-trained office workers, acted to sponge hundreds of thousands off the job market.

At the same time, Reagan has rejiggered the tax



laws to give business a subsidy for the purchase of equipment—a prize for replacing people with machines. Labor-saving machinery really and truly does save labor, which means it puts people out of work. If these changes occur through the play of those vaunted market forces, they may lead to an expanding economy and new employment possibilities. When they occur because of a distortion of market forces, as in this case, they just mean fewer jobs.

Lastly, Reagan has made it holy writ that American labor has “priced itself out of the market” and must “again” become competitive. From the Lincoln administration onward, it was never our policy to keep American wages competitive. It was the reverse. For generations, the fact that the American workman was the highest paid in the world was considered proof of the greatness of our civilization. That was what William McKinley’s campaign slogan, “A Full Dinner Pail,” was about. The plutocrats who dominated the turn-of-the-century Republican ascendancy detested labor unions with the same ferocity as the people Ronald Reagan has to dinner at the White House. But it never occurred to them that the American work force deserved no better than the coolies of the sweatshops of Asia. Cut, cut, cut the wage till it’s the same in Pontiac and Flint as it is in Yokohama, but with a difference. American workers will be reduced to the purchasing power of their Japanese counterparts, but without the protection and the job guarantees you get on the far side of the Pacific.

The Reaganites go further. This president has proposed we help some of the lowest wage areas in the world set up plants to compete against us. Haiti, Guatemala, places like that, are to become the locus of American tax incentives for investment by American capital in plants with duty-free access to our home markets. Under cover of international charity, this is another scheme to help American business escape the American worker.

FOR ALL his schmooze and yukety-yuk about how he can sympathize with the nine-to-fivers commuting on the freeway, Reagan shares the irritation of the millionaires he hangs out with about how we’ve had it so good and had it so easy. When these guys used to say, “What this country needs is a first-class recession,” they weren’t kidding. They had more in mind than rescuing the bond market and the inflation-battered creditor class. They meant we needed a hiding; we needed adversity to teach us to appreciate having less, to learn us to give an honest day’s work for a day’s pay, to make us punctual and respectful. Tug on your forelock, son, when you address Mr. Moneybags, and don’t be impudently looking him in the eye.

The social-discipline strain in Reaganism takes several forms. We have the out-and-out Christian

cruelty of a Jesse Helms warbling, “Praise the Lord,” as the Rev. Piety and his wife, Evangeline, tell the fifteen-year-old rape-incest victim that God demands she have the baby. Or we have George F. Will’s seigneurial disdain for lesser people’s unfathomable preference for socialized medicine. But George has never visited the substandard nursing homes where there are no attendants to change the nappies of whining, incontinent old people.

Against a mosaic of such social values, one of the Reagan Reaction’s favorite buzzwords ought to be appreciated. The word is “voluntarism.” A majestic word, suggestive of de Tocqueville and the staunch yeomanry of the Federalist period, when the government that governs least was best, and governing America—that pre-adamite minute in the American garden, before the interventionist serpent began to usurp the responsibilities and services that neighbors accorded each other. Such an arrangement can exist only in a society where all men and women are roughly equal, as men like James Madison knew. The voluntarism Reaganism preaches depends on an equality it despises. Jefferson without justice, without a squashed and flattened distribution of wealth, is oligarchic exploitation, or sloganeering to pep up one’s position in the opinion polls, as this passage from a Reagan speech, delivered at the Waldorf Astoria-Hotel to a Grand Ballroom full of millionaires, illustrates:

Now there are volunteer groups across the nation called Gleaners. . . . One of the first of these was formed by a student at my alma mater, a little tiny college out in Illinois, Eureka College. He got the idea a few years back when there was so much talk at the time of world hunger. He and members of his fraternity got permission to go into the fields after harvest and pick up what had been missed.

In California, a local charity group called Gleaners Statewide works in fields and orchards salvaging acres of produce that would be left unpicked or lying on the ground to rot because labor costs have made it uneconomic to salvage. . . . Don’t tell us we can’t cope with our problems. Don’t tell us that America’s best days are behind her.

Reagan’s voluntarism is stale food gleanings and plate scrapings served to the deserving, nonpromiscuous poor from a soup-kitchen ladle. Lady Bountiful is back distributing charity’s degrading crust. Voluntarism is Nancy Fancy in a suitably understated Galanos, evoking the Queen Mother, circa 1913, touring a new Borstal and smiling in indifferent condescension at the dirty-faced juvenile delinquent sons of Welsh colliers. Reagan’s voluntarism is social control, the well-to-do volunteering to give a little to proper charities, which do not encourage hedonistic self-expression or the striking of histrionic, possibly destabilizing, political poses. The underclass can no longer be allowed to be dependent on a

ureaucratized social-welfare apparatus that has a built-in tendency to make common cause for common benefit with the clients. The 1960s and 1970s showed the dangers of allowing the control of charity to slide, even a mite, into less than friendly hands. You will not see voluntarism applied to the financing of aircraft carriers, however.

During the Great Depression, one highly placed business idiot suggested that restaurants collect table scraps in buckets so that the half-eaten food could be served to the unemployed. Herbert Hoover, who has something of a voluntarist himself, failed to endorse that one, and might have paused before committing himself to feeding the hungry by gleaming half-rotten food from the fields and spoiled omnivores from the docks. But Hoover, a self-made man of breathtaking accomplishment, did not have the Reagan group's sense of superiority over people with less money, nor did he share their conviction that those who are without work won't work. Jobs are good enough for malingerers.

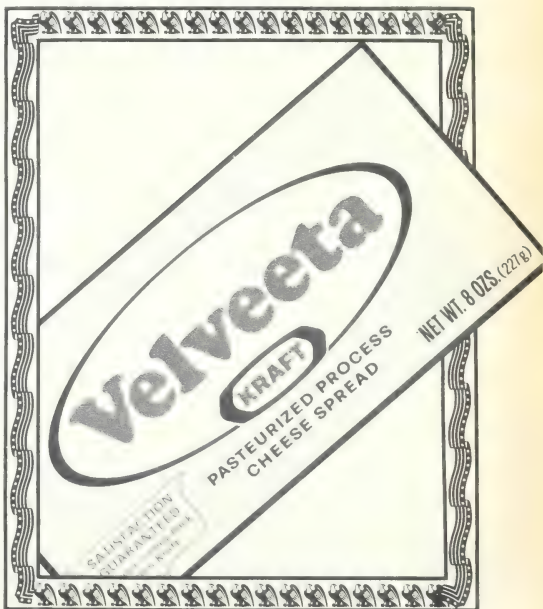
NOT LONG AGO, President Reagan was asked an unemployment question at a press conference. He answered that in the previous Sunday's issue of the *Washington Post* there had been pages upon pages of help-wanted ads. In 1975, during the Ford recession, he remarked on his syndicated radio show that "the classified-ad pages of the newspapers are often carrying record numbers of help-wanted ads." When he was still governor of California, he gave the same answer to the unemployment question at a 1971 press conference. Recession, depression, you'll never convince Ronald Reagan you can't get a job if you're willing to work.

This delusion comes from spending his early adulthood in the Great Depression. Reagan's rich friends in his age group share it. You've heard a variant of it yourself when you've bumped into a successful man in his late sixties or early seventies. They tell you, "Sonny, you don't know what tough s---. You got it easy. All you kids growin' up now got it easy, not like me, not like when I was a kid coming up."

They'd smash you over the head with their canes if you answered that they were actually the luckiest generation in our history. Too young to lose anything in the crash, they came out of school in time to cash in on the longest sustained economic rocket ride any nation has enjoyed since the onset of the industrial revolution. They had nothing to do with it but count their money and get rich. These were the lucky bums who were standing there with a tuba in their hands the day it rained gold. But they confused their good fortune with their merit, as though they had something to do with arranging World War II and the other factors that made the period a uniquely prosperous one.

Look at the Reagan of the 1930s: a no-talent jerk with looks, charm, and a line of blarney who talks himself into one cushy job after another. A movie gigolo who lucks into being on the sound stage of history as high prosperity carries the entire society upward into the era of tail fins and Golden Arches. Then come the 1950s. In return for his manful anti-communistic efforts in the screen actors' union, the pimps, procurers, and purveyors of popular culture who own stage, screen, and radio arrange for him to be paid off with a job selling General Electric toasters on TV and smarmy right-wing politics on the chicken-croquette circuit. How humiliating to think of this unlettered, self-assured bumpkin being our president.

The time and circumstances of Ronald Reagan's career, his marriage to the ice maiden, and his induction into the haute-couture bigotries of the Anglo-Saxon slice of Hollywood where cocaine is not sniffed—everything in his *curriculum vitae* misshaped his understanding of himself and the world in which, as he crosses the threshold of old age, he is the single most powerful human being. Unemployment doesn't exist because he could always get a job. War is a tolerable possibility because he fought his war making training films in which the wounded bled ketchup and the dead jumped up back into life as soon as the director yelled, "Cut!" If he and his frightening conspiracy of gold-plated grandfathers and dippy grandchildren insist on ab-



solite American global hegemony, it comes from being poured into the mold of maturity looking at newsreels of the Five-Star General of the Armies, Douglas MacArthur, giving the law to the cringing Japanese on the foredeck of the U.S.S. *Missouri*. Reagan and Al Haig and the other palsied personalities in high places, with their pacemakers and coronary bypasses, want to reactivate the battleships, whether they know it or not, for a sea passage back to that time when foreign-policy questions were simple because we had all the power and the rest of the world had none. A trillion and a half dollars for armaments isn't too much if it enables 220 million Americans to put on their foam-rubber Number One mittens and bunny hop around the world in an equatorial conga line.

As Reagan ages, Reagan gets more dangerous. The years do not make all of us mellow. *Vide* King Lear. Age can be the father of rage and a reckless willfulness, a perverted purity of principle that rivals the craziest behavior of youth. You can see it in Reagan, whom the years haven't endowed with wisdom. You can see it in his emotional inability to take advantage of the China policy that Richard Nixon bequeathed to his successors. Age and his ideological arteriosclerosis rob Reagan of nimbleness and subtlety. And he is abetted and egged on by the myriads of capitalist-youth marching and chanting societies, the Jousts for Jesus, the Young Americans for Freedom, the Helms Helpers. Organized on every campus and in every church, the youth brigades emit a constant white-noise roar of approval through which these hard old men pursue the work of finding and refining the unalloyed abstract values so dear to demented idealism.

WITHOUT the great ideological apparatus of which he is the pinnacle, Ronald Reagan would be just another right-wing crackpot. The ideological activity that brought Lincoln to power—the music, the books, like “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*—were as nothing compared with the backup Reagan has: the Hoover Institution, the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute, the centers for the study of this and that. All in all, several hundred million dollars are spent every year on an enormous whore corps of academics, journalists, and media hustlers, to dominate every platform and podium with the propaganda of reaction. This interlocking chain of institutions recruits, trains, and plans for the political agglomeration that embodies the ideology. There has been nothing like it in our national government before. The comparisons that have occasionally been made between the staffing and stocking of the Reagan administration and the New Deal are erroneous. Roosevelt's recruiting out of a few Ivy League schools was unsystematic and unplanned, catch-as-catch-can contrast-

ed with the computer printouts and personnel dossiers the Reagan people use.

The reactionary apparatchiks give the tone to what has happened in Washington behind the leading man's smile. They grin their heads off whenever a reporter comes around and make themselves available for endless interviews in which the same inconsequential nonsense is repeated and noted ad nauseam. The cumulative effect is to make the White House seem like a sunny place, a relaxed and low-key government where doors are always open and ears are always ready to hear the other side of an argument.

The real tone of this administration can be picked up by watching James Watt at the Department of Interior as he prays on his knees next to his desk. It is Watt who said there are two kinds of people in this country, Americans and liberals. That wasn't a joke. Watt is not a funny man, he is a scary one. His department is where they keep the enemies list of people and organizations and where, if you have the wrong background—like being in the Carter administration—they'll not only hound you out of government, which you can't object to if you believe as I do in giving the victor the spoils, but will also try to get you blacklisted in the private sector.

Ultimately, a president is responsible for the tone and type of person who dominates his administration. Reagan has stocked his with stereotypical right-wing paranoids: gross corruptionists using the language of libertarian deregulation for personal and corporate enrichment; hypocritical moral majoritarians who don't live the way they preach; proud, arrogant, mean, dishonest, Jew-hating, black-hating white men with hard, clinging wives who spend their lives having lunch and shopping. In a year and a half, they have turned around the social climate of Washington so that you now hear language and demeaning jokes that some of us thought had been stamped out of our national life, even at the country club. Not so. Just the other day, one of Ronald Reagan's oldest and closest personal and political associates was heard in the dining room of the Metropolitan Club, the city's hoity-toiest citadel of white maledom, carrying on at the top of his voice about “the niggers.”

Ronald Reagan has also destroyed the best chance we had for governmental reform. Lord knows, after a full term of Carterism the country was pining for it, but the Reagan record is so bad that he has opened the door for the rehabilitation and return of liberal hacks like Sir Walter Mondale. If Mondale goes to the White House, we will never have to worry that the FBI will open our mail, but we will have to worry about whether the postperson will deliver it. America is a good country as countries go, certainly one that deserves a better future than one infinitely oscillating twixt compassionate incompetents and vile-spirited fanatics.

Ronald Reagan, I don't like you. □

LIVE

*six months
with a*

MILLIONAIRE



Projects, People, and Places.

by Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney

Editors' note: Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney wrote down everything that happened to him during the year 1979, had it printed up under the title Live a Year With a Millionaire, and distributed it to friends for Christmas 1981. What follows is a large portion of January and February, plus brief selections from March, April, May, and June.

Prologue

THOSE WHO have read my book *High Peaks* know that all my lifetime has been exciting and varied, inspired by loyalty to my country, new projects, people, and places. These motivations prevail today.

So, I am now going to relate my life with my wife, Marylou, in the year 1979. To you readers I hope it will give the desire to prolong your lives actively and acquire newfound pleasures.

We live in an amazing country today, where you can improve your way of life if you have the desire

and the energy to try. Don't live in the past. Live for today and tomorrow, and "Laugh and the world laughs with you, weep and you weep alone."

I realize that in this book I have not adequately described many things about Mary's role in our married life.

First, then, she always dresses beautifully for whatever scenario we are in.

Second, she decorates and furnishes all of our homes in ways that please me and her.

Third, she invites the guests, seats the tables, and provides the entertainment for all the parties we give. Many of these are to raise money for worthwhile charities.

Fourth, and by no means least, she is a truly great cook, and has kept me in good physical and mental

Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney is a former assistant secretary of the Air Force and undersecretary of commerce. According to the cover of his book, "He was a polo player of international acclaim, rowed on the crew at Yale, is a hunter of note and one of the most successful breeders of Thoroughbred horses in the country."

health. My role is to keep working in my businesses, to enjoy our way of life, and to encourage Mary in her many talents and projects.

January

ON THE STROKE of midnight New Year's Eve we were in three feet of snow at Camp Deerlands in the Adirondack Mountains of New York State.

Camp Deerlands on Whitney Park near Long Lake is where we go for my lumber operations and wilderness life. It is a typical north woods camp, made of native woods from the surrounding forest. My grandfather built it, my father improved it a little, and Mary, my wife, has made it a luxurious hideaway in the vast wilderness which surrounds it. With her great taste and courage to tackle the impossible she has created a luxurious home, added a kitchen, dining room and children's quarters, an enclosed porch, and a nice caretaker's cottage with rooms for our staff. . . .

It was a wild northern night, temperature ten above zero, huge snowflakes dropping, and rockets careening through the pine trees into the far black yonder. We all raised many wine and champagne glasses to toast the New Year. Our good butler, James, from Kentucky, joined the celebration. The scene was highly exciting and emotional. I think I had too many toasts, shall we call them, so at twelve-twenty, January 1, 1979, I marched proudly to our king-sized bed on the upper floor and fell into a sound sleep. . . .

On January 10, we flew back to Kentucky, where it was colder than Deerlands. . . .

In my previous book, *High Peaks*, I highlighted one of my firm beliefs about way of life about age sixty: "keep the mind innovating." My two mental innovating projects have been writing and oil painting. They are both very stimulating to me. As far back as college days I wrote three short stories, which made the Yale lit magazine. My first oil painting show was in 1950 and I have had six since then.

I have had a real tough time deciding whether to paint or write in the year 1979. For me, writing requires even more concentration than painting. Then one morning a thought came to me—"Why don't I try to write about my current life?" It's what makes me tick. So I pulled up a chair, grabbed a pencil, and got down to work writing.

Thursday, January 18, dawned with a cloudless sky, brilliant sunshine, and temperature twenty degrees. I wanted relaxation in the form of a trip somewhere in the countryside and, to my surprise, Mary agreed to go with me. We would work all morning and leave in my Volkswagen bus, with Jouett Redmon driving, at twelve noon. I was to select the route. After consultation with Jouett we chose to lunch at the Cracker Barrel restaurant near Richmond, then

on up Route 52 to Bybee to see the famous pottery-making plant established there in 1809. I had been to neither one but had heard via some friends that they were something special. So, at noon we piled into the bus with poodle Bee Bee and some spare food Mary had prepared in case we wanted to stop for a picnic at tea-time somewhere along the route. . . .

After looking around through the entire little factory we returned to the entrance room and purchased some lovely things selected by my wife, Mary. What an unexpected experience it had been for us in this remote spot.

We had seen a Project I had never seen before, met and talked congenially with local People, and found a unique Place. When you think about it, pottery has been made since the beginning of civilization, as we know it, and we have seen how it was done and is being done. The only improvement, I was told, was electricity, which operates the potter's wheel, where in olden times the potter made the wheel revolve with a foot pedal. It must have been exhausting work. . . .

That evening at dinner, cooked by Mary, we rejoiced to think that we had had the initiative to go somewhere new and it had been very worthwhile. Mary went so far as to say, "Sonny, I would like to invite some friends and take that trip again next week. The relaxation will do me good. Will you do it?" "Yes," I said. "How about next Tuesday, weather permitting?" "Fine with me," she replied laughing. "I will be too busy until then to ask friends. Will you do it?" "Sure thing," I replied, delighted that she had really enjoyed the outing.

Sunday, January 21, we held a church service at noon in our log chapel. We prayed for the hundreds of people who would be suffering today from the weather. . . .

January 24 was our twenty-first wedding anniversary. Strangely enough we were actually married in a snowstorm. Does that mean that our marriage has been stormy? The answer so far has been "no"—only as is normal between male and female, at widely spaced intervals. My resolution is that I shall not start an argument today.

On Sunday, we have asked twenty-two of our local friends for a picnic supper in our atrium, with a movie afterward.

Mary and Jouett had made lovely flower arrangements, and the atrium was warm and inviting. People were in a party mood, having dug themselves out of the ice and snow on their farms to get here. Mitchell and Coleman, our part-time waiters, served the dinner: first, crab bisque, then chicken with ham biscuits, bibb lettuce salad, and finally a huge wedding anniversary ice cream cake.

We all then took our seats by the pool to watch the movie *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, with Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russell starring. I rate the picture among the five all-time greats.

I know something about movies, having produced *A Star Is Born*, *Rebecca*, and *Missouri Traveler* with my wife, Mary, in the star role in the 1950s, John Ford directing. We were not married then, but we fell in love and got married the year following, 1958. I rate a picture by its excellence in four departments: Script, Casting, Directing, and Photography. This one has them all in a super quality. . . .

Our audience that night clapped and cheered as the picture progressed. I believe we were all sorry when *THE END* appeared on the screen. By midnight all the guests had left, and Mary and I rejoiced that we had had such a happy wedding anniversary, and vowed that we would have twenty-one more.

February

FEBRUARY 1 we woke up in our suite in the old motel at Marineland, Florida, with the surf pounding on the beach, a roaring wind, azure-blue sky, and brilliant sunshine. Yesterday we had flown down from Lexington to St. Augustine, driven south some fourteen miles, and lined by ourselves at the Dolphin restaurant. . . .

I had to prepare for our Directors' meeting tomorrow so I spent the day with General McMillan, President; John Bailey, Secretary; and Cliff Townsend, General Manager. Last evening we gave a supper party at the Dolphin for the Directors, their wives, and our good friends from St. Augustine, total number nineteen. Mary and Assistant Manager Cecil Walker planned all the details for the fun evening, and it went off beautifully.

The Directors' meeting next day was attended by the full board, which includes Newton Ebaugh, the engineer who designed the complicated water system. The meeting went well, and so was adjourned by lunchtime. . . .

The next week all hands were planning the three-day visit of the Spanish Ambassadors. Mary and I did manage to get some relaxation in between and after work hours. We explored the countryside and found some restaurants we had never been to. Then another day we drove down to Daytona, toured the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, where I got my Doctoral degree last December. President Jack Hunt provided a delightful buffet lunch in his private dining room. There were eight of us present, four men and four women, all key people in the University management. We were introduced to everyone as Doctor Whitney and Doctor Whitney, my wife, Mary, having received a degree of Doctor of Humane Letters at the American University in Leylin, Switzerland.

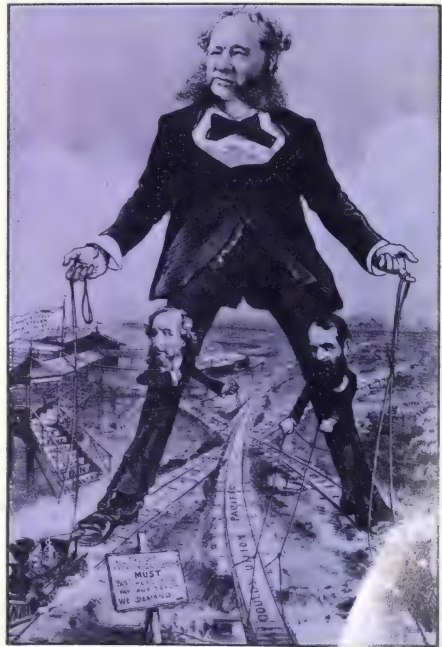
In the evenings we dined every night with friends in St. Augustine at their homes. The Drysdales (he owns the Alligator Farm), the McMillans in their new house on a lovely lake, and then Adjutant Gen-

eral Ballard's for a Spanish supper at their historic house. . . .

Saturday, we had a glorious day with [our daughter Cornelia and a college classmate], taking them to lunch down the coast at Palm Coast Inn, and dinner here at the Dolphin. In the afternoon, they drove to St. Augustine and walked through the restored historic area. Much talk over pre-dinner Planter's Punches and white wine, and I learned a lot about the thinking and way of life of the college campus.

Sunday morning, the girls packed up and departed in Cornelia's Toyota for Boca Raton. Mary and I decided to drive somewhere to find some new place for lunch. We are lucky indeed to be here as the rest of the U.S. is under snowstorms and freezing temperatures—last night we talked with daughter Heather in Lake Placid and she said the temperature is sixteen below zero. They predict here in northern Florida that we will have seventy above zero today. For me, we are in the right place and tonight we look forward to a delicious dinner at the waterfront home of the John Baileys.

On Tuesday, we are invited by the Newton Ebaughs, our Marineland engineer, to a lunch in our honor at Gainesville, some eighty miles west of Marineland. General and Mrs. McMillan picked us up at nine-thirty to drive us over. What a drive we



Famous Millionaires 1: William Henry Vanderbilt

The Granger Collection

Good people



Helper of the handicapped. Ad Demmers of Holland helps handicapped children and their parents

Rescuer. In Germany, Alfons Thomann works as an unpaid volunteer diver for the Bavarian Red Cross when underwater catastrophes occur.



In-the-spot Samaritan. As a volunteer for the Milwaukee Red Cross, Dale Clark rings his emergency services van right to the scene to aid victims of fires and other disasters



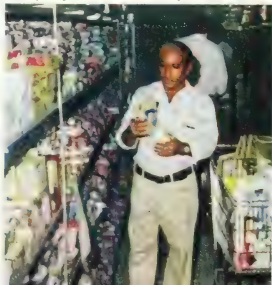
Nature preserver. Erwin Kaempfl volunteers 15 to 20 hours a week as an auxiliary gamekeeper in Neuchâtel, Switzerland



Fund raiser. Irene Pitcock gives her time to the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary in Louisville raising funds through bake sales, picnics and bingo games for hospitals, handicapped children, the blind, the needy



Food provider. Manuel Jaquez helped found a cooperative supermarket that provides his Dominican Republic community with quality food at reasonable prices



Life saver. Barbara Skolaut saves lives and property for the Manchester (Virginia) Volunteer Fire Department.

Home providers. Mike Gay and his wife Anita thought about adoption, decided they could help more children by volunteering to provide a foster home for Houston's homeless children



Church
Fox joins
works se
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volunte



Teenagers' friend. Joyce Cranon works with disadvantaged youngsters in St. Louis, Mo. to help the teenagers realize their full potential.

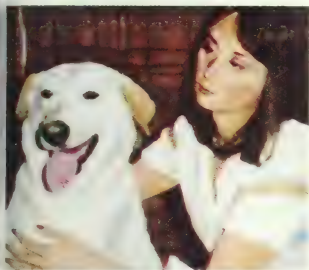
Beauty restorer. Nora Kennington works to restore neglected gardens in N.Y.'s Central Park.



o good things.



MS angels. In Melbourne, Australia, Shirley Delamott, Pat Kein and Heilige Grieve raised over \$6,000 for the Multiple Sclerosis Society with picnics, a movie and supper evening, plant and recipe book sales and raffles



Animal protector. Last year Debbie Goik helped over 100 injured or neglected animals as a volunteer for the Humane Society in Livingston, Michigan.



Soapbox safety teacher. Alan Lane helped organize a soapbox derby association in Fulton, N.Y. to teach kids safe driving from the ground up.

Aid organizer. S.K. Patankar donates his time to the Bombay Lions Club to help raise funds and organize aid to the elderly, handicapped and blind



The good people you see at left are (as they would be the first to tell you) just a sampling of the thousands of people within our Philip Morris family who work as volunteers in our hometowns around the world.

They look quite ordinary; and they are, in reality, quite extraordinary. They work hard for a living, and then, in their off-time, they work hard for nothing. They want to help those who are less fortunate than themselves, and in doing so, they help all of us. For the hard fact is that without these good people, our societies and our lives would be a lot less liveable.

And the delightful fact is this: Every man and woman you see here testifies that the volunteer work they do is "fun," "enjoyable," "rewarding."

They also say "It's easy to get started." Right now you can probably think of some school, library, hospital or church—or some service, cultural or community group—that would love to have you pick up the phone and offer your help for maybe an hour or two a week.

We think you will. After all, good people do good things. And you wouldn't have read this far if you weren't a pretty good person yourself.

Philip Morris Incorporated

Good people make good things.

Makers of Marlboro, Benson & Hedges 100's, Merit, Parliament Lights, Virginia Slims and Cambridge; Miller High Life Beer, Lite Beer and Löwenbräu Special and Dark Special Beer; 7UP and Diet 7UP.



had, missing the correct road and making a long detour. Central Florida is a wild marsh and forestland interspersed with a few tiny villages.

We reached the Country Club in two hours and twenty minutes and were the first of thirty-eight guests to arrive. Soon the room was full of VIPs from as far away as Tallahassee and Jacksonville. . . .

Thursday—arrival date of the Spanish Ambassador Llado to the United States from Washington and his lovely wife, Pilar; the Spanish Ambassador



Famous Millionaires 2: Daddy Warbucks

to the U.N., Jaime de Pinies, and his wife, Luz. There was a dedication ceremony at the Menendez Park. We had two cars with Marvin and Mike driving. Mary was praised for her work on the St. Augustine Preservation Board and received a scroll from the Mayor.

In the evening, we went to the Rod and Gun Club for an oyster roast, a great place, with one hundred people. Fantastic dinner cooked and served by the leading citizens and children of St. Augustine, and a country-music band. We danced and ate too much—but a good time was had by all.

[Friday]—Rita O'Brien and Mary took the Spanish Ambassadors and their wives on a tour of the Restoration of old St. Augustine. A luncheon was given by the Mayor at the Women's Exchange's Historic House. A visit to the old Fort and to the Deaf and Blind School filled the afternoon. I had work to do with the General Manager and stayed at Marine-land. The temperature was seventy-four degrees with a west wind, and many people on the beach.

In the evening we gave a party at the Officers' Club in St. Augustine. The Officers' Club at the Armory is an old Spanish Monastery and the original walls are still intact. The night was balmy and it was a beautiful sight to watch the huge fires of the Bar-B-Q's in the large patio, where ribs and chickens were slowly being cooked. The tables in the arched cloister were done in red checkered cloths and had red and white geraniums on the tables and around

the various rooms. After a delicious dinner and many toasts back and forth we went to the Bergmanns' for games and a nightcap. A fun evening for everyone. . . .

Sunday—the Ambassadors and their wives left at ten-thirty, and Mary and C.V.W. at ten forty-five. We flew to Saranac Lake. It was an unbelievably clear day over the high ranges of Adirondack Mountains, which were snow-covered. Cliff Stackhouse met us in the Jaguar, and drove us to Deerlands. . . .

Monday was a clear day and the temperature was ten above with a rising sun filtering through the huge pine trees. Snow drifts were six to ten feet tall.

Cliff Stackhouse arrived in the old red station wagon, and we packed it up, along with the Jaguar, and off we went for a week's stay at "Chipmunk Five," a lodge we had rented at Lake Placid. . . . Cliff helped us unload, unpack, and we settled into a comfortable three-bedroom chalet with a view of Mirror Lake and the village of Lake Placid. . . .

In the evening, seven-thirty, Mr. Ed Lewi (head of Press) picked us up and drove to his house out of the village on a hilltop—eight for dinner in his modern Swiss chalet. Dr. and Mrs. Hart, the Brooks (our lawyer), and all of their wives, who are very active in the Olympic affairs, were there. Delicious drinks and dinner, and much talk and jokes. Back to Chipmunk Five at midnight and so to bed.

Tuesday, February 20, believe it or not was my eightieth birthday. Mary cooked breakfast—orange juice, half grapefruit, oatmeal, scrambled eggs, bacon, and coffee. She had a hard time cooking it in a new kitchen, I had an easy time eating it.

My eightieth birthday did not affect me, as I have thought about it for many days. When I was fifty I never expected to go beyond sixty-five. Then, with a happy married life and much study on the proper foods to eat, exercise, innovating, keeping active, my health and outlook really improved. New Projects, Places, and People—and that's what we had today—the Olympics, Chipmunk Five, and new people. . . .

Friday morning, Mrs. Renata Stanton from the Olympic Protocol office took us to Whiteface Mountain VIP room, and up the mountain in four-wheel-drive vehicle. Hundreds on the slopes, and the International Downhill Race for men and women. The Germans won both, and U.S. second and third in both. Then back to Chipmunk Five at three P.M. It was an exciting experience, met many people. Parking lot packed with cars.

Evening—taking it easy, then to Scudders'. Their house is on the shore of Placid Lake—gorgeous home. Other guests, the Coles (they have a beautiful big ranch) and the Fred Browns (he is Chairman of the Board of the Lake Placid Hotel). After cocktails, we went to the lakeside restaurant, Holiday Harbor, next door. Very good dinner and much talk and laughter. People here work hard but they enjoy the after-work hours. They are a cosmopolitan group, come from places all over the States. . . .

Monday. We flew Executive Jet from Saranac to Lexington, arrived at Whitney House four-thirty P.M. They have had recent snow and the countryside was white.

After unpacking, down to the sun porch, our favorite spot, and I start to relax. James, Louella, and Mary Ann are there to greet us. Delicious dinner of fried chicken, green peas, salad, and freshly baked cake. After dinner, Mary and I played miniature pool and then cribbage. Our poodle, Bee Bee, and two cats, Lady Blue and Nosey, happy to be with us. Outside, Bear, our golden Labrador, guarded the house. Talk, talk, on our good luck and things we accomplished in February.

Tuesday, awoke at seven forty-five (our regular time here) to a brilliant, dry, sunshiny day, not a cloud in the sky. I went to the atrium, did my exercises, swam, and then showered—first time in two months—and felt full of pep. Good, big breakfast, then to my office. The office on the farm was originally a small red-brick home. Actually, when we first came here Mary and I lived there. Now it is a very nice and cheerful office with the kitchen where my staff can cook and eat lunch.

For your information, my main office is in New York City. The subsidiaries are in Marineland, Whitney Park, Mallorca, and Kentucky. Wherever I am, at the time, is my main office, for I communicate with the others daily by telephone, letter, or cable.

My wife Mary's secretary, Mrs. Douglas, lives on Cape Cod but joins us whenever we wish, and we are in constant communication with her. Without her Mary could never handle our many, many social meetings, parties, and charity fund-raising projects.

Mary is not only occupied with worthwhile projects everywhere we go but she entertains beautifully and is herself the life of the party.

ON FRIDAY, March 2, Mary and I flew down to Palm Beach in Executive Jet Lear. . . .

We rented a Hertz drive-your-own Buick car and drove to sister Barbara Headley's house, where we stayed until Monday morning. Our good friends Ambassador and Mrs. Guilford Dudley gave a dinner dance in our honor at their ocean-front home. It was such fun seeing our friends Alfred and Betsy Bloomingdale there. . . .

The next day we went over the Breaker's Row to the home of my nephew Leverett Miller and his wife, Linda. They have one of the old cottages there, charming in its turn-of-the-century way. We met for the first time my grandniece, Whitney Miller, a bubbling little girl just learning to walk. After a delicious glass of iced tea and many cookies and cake we returned to Jungle Road to dress for the Palm Beach Hospital Ball. We had cocktails with Mary Sanford and Rose Kennedy, who looked as young as ever. I was seated next to her at the ball at the Everglades and she was a superb dancer.

The crowning event, of which there were many, was to me a day we spent on Sue Whitmore's boat. A group of twenty friends, including our daughter Cornelia and her friend Terry Kelly, up from Boca Raton College. Lunch aboard, cruising north up the Inland Waterway. I was surprised to see hotels, condominiums, and marinas full of boats, under construction everywhere. Are we in a depression? It certainly did not look it.

Simone Karoff and Wally Findlay gave a fun party at Findlay Gallery on Worth Avenue. They have a beautiful roof garden and it was a beautiful night. Many old friends were with us and we danced and



Cinemabilia

Famous Millions 3: Fred Astaire in Top Hat

sang until the neighbors complained of the noise. A wonderful and fun evening—a perfect goodbye to Palm Beach...

Upon reaching our farm in Lexington, a large flock of male grackles flew in. This is the first sign that spring is around the corner. Mary and I started detailed planning for the spring months.

She is busy with the building, decorating, and furnishing of her new chalet, they call it lodge, in Lake Placid, New York. I am faced with organizing my



© Walt Disney Productions

Famous Millionaires 4: Scrooge McDuck

racehorses for spring racing—where to go and when? Signing 1978 income-tax returns is around the corner, general business-investment problems, writing this book, and planning outdoor excursions for relaxation...

Then came a glorious day at the Iroquois Hunt Club for a Hunt breakfast. I was with Fauntleroy Pursley, Master of the Hounds, his wife, Reese Kimbrough, Lafon Ingels, and Sue Wahlgren. My wife could not join us as she was up to her neck preparing for a Gala at the Headley-Whitney Museum, a TV Telethon for Cardinal Hill Hospital, and dinner and movie for sixteen in the atrium. After lunch, I took a long drive through the sparsely populated country northward, winding up at Pine Grove, then the Derby Waffle House, and on to Whitney Farm.

April

OUR LIFE in 1979 will revolve around seven Places, all of which we call home. The Places are Kentucky, Marineland, Florida, New York City, Saratoga Springs, Whitney Park, Lake Placid, New York, and El Vila on the island of Mallorca in the Mediterranean Ocean. People often ask which we like best. My reply is we love them all. Six of them have business connections and one is purely for vacations. The latter, of course, is Mallorca. If I could only have one, I

would take Cady Hill, Saratoga Springs, New York. We have many lovely friends there and in addition there are the Arts and the best horse racing in the U.S.A., plus a vast countryside for fishing, picnicking, and exploration. It is a small community devoted to improving its facilities and environment. Fortunately, we can afford to keep them all, and each home gives us much pleasure.

May

ON WEDNESDAY morning, May 1, Mary, poolle Bee Bee, and I flew Executive Jet from Lexington to Saratoga Springs, New York. At the airport we were met by our caretaker, Guy Perry, and driven to our local home, Cady Hill...

On Friday, we all drove back to Deerlands and really relaxed in its wild and primitive surroundings... This is the second time in twenty years Mary and I have not been at Churchill Downs for the big event of the year. The favorite, Spectacular Bid, won it impressively. Then with mint juleps and a delicious dinner prepared by Mary, we celebrated our general happiness at all being together again. When the guests departed, Mary, Heather, and I had a game of cribbage, and then to bed with much excellent booze aboard. We should have been on "The Booze Cruise." Hi Ho!...

The next social event was a dinner at the Iroquois Hunt Club, the first foxhunting club west of the Allegheny Mountains... Mary and I joined our local Master of the Hounds and his wife, the Fauntleroy Pursleys, for cocktails on the porch overlooking the creek. Eight others joined us and a cheerful time was had. Then upstairs to the buffet supper and much hound talk. There were eighty people present and I was surprised to see so many young couples. Fountie has done an extraordinary job to keep this sport alive. On hunt days during the fall and winter, the men still wear their "pinks" (red coats) and the women formal riding habits.

At 10 P.M., Mary and I left and she drove me home on Cleveland Road through the very sparsely populated countryside. It is about twenty-five miles and we only saw five automobiles. At home we sat up another fifteen minutes and discussed the new people we had met and our glimpse into the foxhunting world. I had thought it a thing of the past, but it isn't. It is very much alive today. Live and learn, I thought. Some of the fine traditions of the past have survived.

Sunday morning we had church services in our log chapel. The Redmons, Dick Mitchell, Mary, and I attended. Then Mary and I were planning ahead, June, July, August, September, and November. To Marineland, New York City, Mallorca, Rappahannock, Virginia, down the Inland Waterway to Marineland, Florida, on October 18. You'll get it month

by month if you continue to read the book. Not bad for a young eighty-year-old man to even dream up such a program. But it is more than a dream, I'm going to do it, God willing. The only bad part of the plan is packing suitcases, but there always has to be the good and the bad, so forget it—it's really easy with a wife to help you.

June

MARY AND I flew to New York June 2 and the big city was clothed in a mist but the trees were in full bloom in Central Park. Our apartment overlooks the Park from a small outdoor terrace. When I looked down I just had to go for a walk. So I did, and took my usual walk through the Zoo, then around the byways to my favorite pond. Alas, they have drained the pond and the walk around was shut off. So I found a vacant seat under a huge spreading oak tree and sat for an hour in meditation. . . .

That night, our good friend Budd Calisch dined with us, and after dinner on the terrace a half moon cast its unreal light over the city.

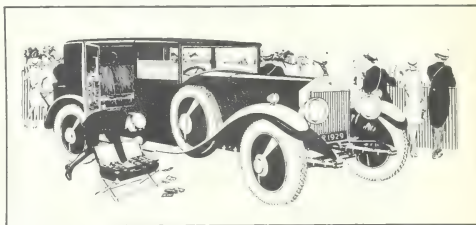
Sunday morning a three-hour Jewish Parade passed on Fifth Avenue and the music from some fifty bands kept us awake.

In the afternoon, I took a longer walk in the Park, one and a half hours to be exact, and came home refreshed and exhilarated. That evening we were guests of honor at a dinner party given by Pano de Hoyos at Pearl's Chinese restaurant—all Spanish guests including Ambassador de Pinies and his charming wife, Luz. Delicious food and animated conversation typical of Spaniards. The word was that a move to more conservative government is going on in many nations of the world. I, too, felt this and I sincerely hope the United States will follow suit. The party broke up at ten-thirty and when we reached home Mary and I sat up another half hour to absorb our new environment and change of people.

Monday morning, I took a taxi down to my office, worked all day, then a one-hour stroll through Central Park. That evening we had twelve friends for dinner at our apartment. The bad weather cleared and the moon came out. It was hard to keep the guests off the outside porch. The great news broadcaster Walter Cronkite and his wife were with us and so there was much talk about current situations in the world today. I had never had the pleasure of meeting him before, but Mary had known them in Kansas City, Missouri. So, after all the other guests left about eleven P.M., the four of us sat on the porch over a final glass of wine. The mood was very happy, so we gave up the serious talk and swapped off-color stories. Finally, Mary and I chatted alone about our forthcoming trip to Switzerland, and so to bed.

The next day was bright sunshine and warm. To my office and then I had lunch next door at the Crowdaddy, a good New Orleans meal of barley soup and shrimp. Then a two-mile walk through the Park and another dinner party of twenty-four at our apartment. A great group of people, all different than last night, more of a horsy set—Leslie Combs, the Luros, Whitney Tower, Jobi Arnold, Kay Jeffords, Mollie Wilmot. The guests were enchanted with the view from the porch and could not even believe they were in New York City. Leysin, Switzerland, has a magic mountain, and Mary and I have here a magic apartment. . . .

Thursday, the 21st, Mary and I took Swissair from Basel to Mallorca, arriving at Palma five P.M. This ended the first half of our summer vacation. It had been Places and People (no Projects). . . .



Wednesday, the 27th. The mountains were covered with thick haze. My usual beautiful view from my bedroom window was disappointing. Mary worked all day cooking and preparing for our dinner party. At five P.M. I drove to the beach to relax. By eight-thirty P.M. the sky was clearing and our guests were arriving. Countess Ostrowska and her brother Stephen, Wilson Carter, the Prince de Pless, the Conde de Quelar, and Madame Jinett Hennessy. . . .

Thursday, the 28th. Today was clear and warm, the best day we have had. This morning we drove to San Vicente to see the beach and ocean, and in the afternoon we had a swim at the beach at Alcudia Bay. In the evening we went to Jinett Hennessy's for dinner. Stan Woodward was there, also Jean de Quelar, the Countess Ostrowska, Stephen, Mary, and I. . . .

Friday, the 29th. . . . I am finally relaxed and acclimatized to this island way of life. Breakfast at ten A.M., lunch two-fifteen P.M., dining nine-thirty P.M. Mary and I are in the mood to end our vacation and return to the U.S. We leave Monday. El Vila is more beautiful than ever before with its fantastic flowers and lovely trees, all in top shape kept by Gabriel, our gardener. Our house is immaculate and the food and the service unbelievable for these days. But, to live here, one would have to have a regular job, for without it, one gets lazier and lazier, and slowly drinks a little more each day. It is ideal for ten days' vacation, and then we get the itch to get back to our different projects in the U.S. □

SOVIET BLITZKRIEG: WHO WINS?

An inspection tour of the European front.

by John Keegan

MY JOURNEY round NATO begins as a tale of three German colonels. The first collected me near Stuttgart one fine fall morning to drive across the breadth of Bavaria. Our destination was on the Czech border, in the shadow of the Bohmerwald, the range of hill and forest that has formed one of the principal obstacles to military movement between east and west since armies began to march this way. There, in a small military station just short of the frontier, the Bundeswehr maintains one of its armored reconnaissance battalions, a unit that would be among the first to make contact with Warsaw Pact troops should they ever cross the demarcation line. The colonel had once served in it. This day he was coming to see his son officially sworn into its ranks.

The *Vereidigung*—swearing-in—is a German military ceremony of long tradition. To judge by the crowd I saw assembled along the parade ground's edge, most of the recruits' families had come to see it. Ten years ago, of course, they might not have been there: military service was an unpopular imposition. But times have changed, and these families at least appeared to have accepted the idea that their sons and brothers must go into the army for their fifteen months. They murmured approval as the battalion's commander—my second colonel—addressed the new contingent, explaining to them the gravity of the ceremony and the importance of their oath.

Not long after, I met my third colonel. He too had come to see his son take the oath, and was now my companion, with the others, at lunch in the *Kasino*, as Germans call their officers' clubs. At first

they spoke, out of politeness, in English, but as they fell to reminiscing the conversation lapsed into a German too fast for me to follow. Then a stray phrase emerged whose meaning was unmistakable and arresting: "My father was born in St. Petersburg in 1896..."

It was the battalion commander who had spoken it, and I asked him to explain. Yes, he said, his father had been born there and then had joined the Russian Imperial Army as family tradition ordained. The second colonel chimed in. His father had also gone to war with the cavalry in 1914. But the sovereign he served was the Emperor Franz Josef of Austria-Hungary and he had ridden south, from his mobilization center just a few miles over the Czech border we now faced, to fight the Serbs. It was almost apologetically that the first colonel revealed that his father, also a cavalry officer in 1914, had actually been in the service of the German emperor, who had sent him from East Prussia to fight the French.

Defeat and revolution had canceled the meaning of these family differences. Bolshevism had driven the Tsarist family down a natural line of retreat into Weimar Germany. The Habsburg collapse had forced the second colonel's father to serve the shrunken Austrian state until the Anschluss had incorporated it within the Greater Reich in 1938. The East Prussian family had maintained their home until 1945, but then the Red Army had swept over it, driving the population westward and bringing a new Soviet frontier to run through land that had been German since the Teutonic Knights had won it from the heathen Slavs in the thirteenth century.

All three sons among whom I sat had been cast by the last surges of the Second World War into the western zones of occupation. Ten years later, tradi-

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on had ordained, at the creation of the Federal German Republic and the restoration of a German army, that they should join it. And thus, after an imperial effort a thousand years long, they once more found themselves defending a western German order with the Slavic lands, which ran very much as it had run before Charlemagne proclaimed himself Holy Roman Emperor on Christmas Day in 800 A.D. and inaugurated the great eastward movement of the German peoples.

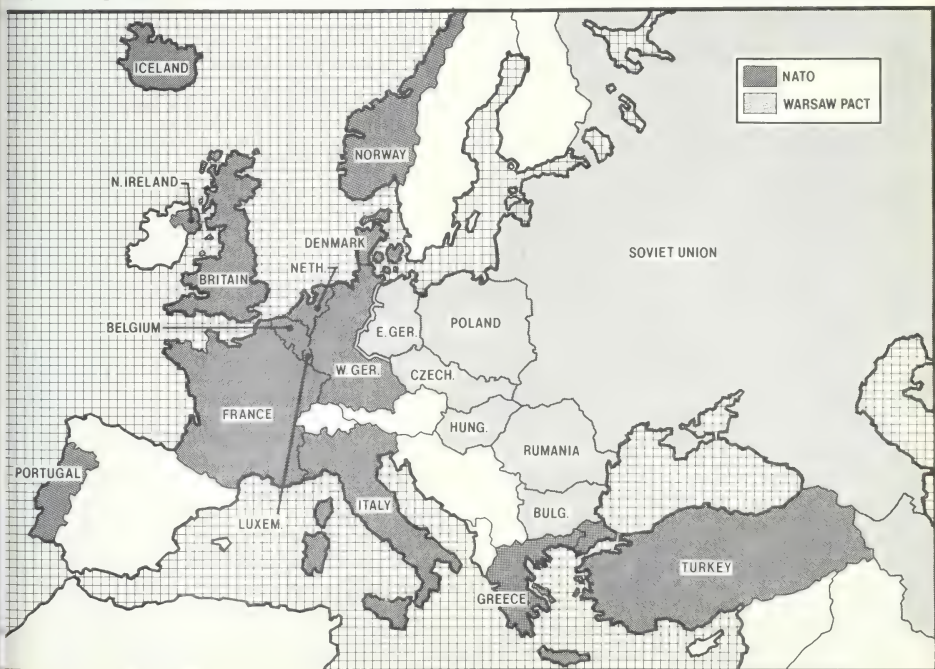
THERE ARE no tears to be shed over the rise and fall of nations, and the colonels asked for none. But there was more to their presence in this minor military outpost of NATO than a mere turning of the pages of history. For the division of Europe along the Elbe and the Danube marks a military as well as a political revolution. It fixes a military frontier, garrisoned by the densest concentration of arms ever deployed anywhere in the name of peace, in a zone never previously militarized.

Germany, it is true, has been much fought over, in the Thirty Years' War, in the eighteenth century, and by Napoleon. But most of those who have campaigned there have been Germans, and the French, the British, or Russians fighting against them were usually the allies of Germans of another allegiance. The notorious internal disunity of Germany, which persisted until 1871, both reflected and

encouraged this military pattern. It had the effect, however, of denying any power the chance to establish fixed positions in the European heartland. So if one looks for their physical sign, fortresses, one does not find them. The Rhine shows its belt of fortification, naturally, since it is one of the great physical frontiers of the world; there medieval castles stand on top of Roman camps and beside fragments of the Siegfried Line. The Baltic trading towns show ancient fortifications. The former German frontiers along the Oder and the Vistula are studded with forts, evidence of Germany's long-drawn-out *Drang nach Osten*.

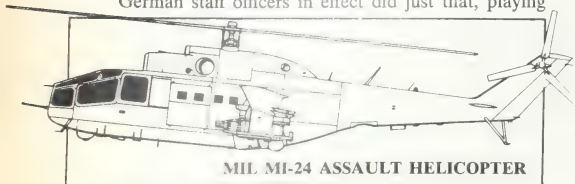
But in the central plain and even on the high southern plateau, where NATO and the Warsaw Pact stand nose to nose, there is—the odd walled town apart—nothing. This is campaigning territory par excellence, if it can be reached. In the past the military prowess of the Germans usually assured, except when they were quarreling among themselves, that foreigners did not get to it. The reckless folly of the Second World War has visited on them a vast encampment of their former opponents amid orchard and pastureland, to which the permanent presence of armies is traditionally alien.

This presents a military conundrum to almost all those involved. War elsewhere in continental Europe is, in a sense, a well-worn routine. The frontier has so often been contested that the grain and texture of the border areas have worked themselves into



Kristina Leahy

the mentality of professional soldiers. Defensive positions, lines of advance, impassable areas are all imprinted on the minds of the armies that have fought over them. Indeed, an efficient staff officer might well be able to reel off a military itinerary through the Low Countries or across the valleys of the Oder and Vistula with the fluency and assurance of a Baedeker guide. In 1940, and again in 1944, the German staff officers in effect did just that, playing



MIL MI-24 ASSAULT HELICOPTER

variations on the operations of 1914 over the same ground.

THE Inner German Border, or Central Region as NATO calls it, being no more than the cease-fire line up to which the victorious Allied armies breasted in 1945, is by contrast a gray and shadowy area. Meticulously mapped and air-photographed though it is, measured, surveyed, and walked over by the staffs of the two opposed alliances, its geography touches no human chord, awakes no instructive memories. Its history yields nothing of significance to NATO military planners, who must base their schemes for keeping the 1945 cease-fire line where it is on an academic analysis of geography, and on informed guesses of their opponents' state of mind.

First and most important guess—to a soldier quite as much as to a peaceable civilian—is whether, should East-West hostilities ever find expression in a war in Europe, nuclear weapons would be used at the outset or at some early stage of the battle. Nuclear weapons abound, on both sides of the Inner German Border, in the warheads of medium- and short-range missiles, tactical airborne ordnance, and artillery shells. NATO has some 6,000 altogether, stored in zones guarded by American troops; the Warsaw Pact has a similar profusion in Russian custody. Soviet means of delivery are much more plentiful, however, and their range and accuracy superior. The Russian equivalents of the American tactical surface-to-surface missiles, Lance and Pershing, outnumber them nine times.

Conventional wisdom has always been that the Warsaw Pact would not use nuclear weapons to gain objectives it might win by other means. Unfortunately this is a judgment of wisdom and not of certainty, and there are indications that suggest the opposite, notably the Pact's capacity to use a wide range of nuclear weapons and a matter-of-fact tone of readiness to do so in Soviet professional military literature. "The Soviets could go nuclear from the

start" easily becomes "will go" in the sort of "let's look at this with our eyes open" discussion the NATO servicemen—like servicemen everywhere—occasionally feel obliged to conduct. The big question is whether NATO is able to match conventional defense against conventional attack, and repel Soviet ground attack in Europe. If it cannot—or if it is *seen* to be unable to do so—the Soviets might well assume that NATO will fall back on its nuclear arsenal early on. They might "pre-empt" just to be on the safe side.

Hence the revival of an intense, weapon-by-weapon, front-by-front analysis of future battle on the soil of the continent. To many it's a nightmarish vision.

Super blitzkrieg

THE ESSENCE of the nightmare—in its land battle form—derives from the apparently great superiority in equipment enjoyed by the Warsaw Pact and the way in which it might be used. The tank, that strange makeshift solution to the problem of trench warfare, remains the measure of military wealth that blitzkrieg made it in the Second World War. And the Russians are richer in tanks than any other nation. They outbuild everyone and they are reluctant to discard any model of tank until it is completely outdated. Since each of their models is merely an up-gunned, up-armored, or up-engined version of the one before the fruit of their policy is a stable of nearly homogeneous types which now number over 50,000 NATO, by comparison, has only 17,000.

The menace of the Soviet tank stock is enhanced by the way in which it is organized for combat. Unlike most Western armies, which are pyramidal—the apex the combat formations, the base the industrial structure feeding into combat—the Soviet army is a Rubik's cube of combat-ready units. The majority are less rather than more combat ready, but the Soviet philosophy of war is that the less ready should be filling up with their human and material reserves—making ready for their place in the rotation—while the more ready are in action. The ruthlessness of mind that this philosophy implies has led Western analysts to call it a blitzkrieg philosophy. And in that it is dedicated to the prosecution of a short war, the analogy seems exact, although it should not be carried too far. The German blitzkrieg of 1940 was waged with only a handful of tank and motorized divisions. In the Soviet army all the divisions—except the eight airborne divisions of course—are either tank or motorized. And since the Soviet motorized divisions contain almost as many tanks as the tank divisions—266 to 325—they constitute together a mass of fighting power such as the Wehrmacht never had at its disposal.

In a sense, therefore, what the Soviet army

reatens is a super blitzkrieg, made even more baleful by certain modern additions to its order of battle. The newest is a complement of self-propelled artillery, which allows 122mm and 152mm howitzers, on tracked mounts, to move at speeds equal to those of tanks, thereby to put down a curtain of mobile firepower in front of an advance. Equally important is the mobility of the Soviet army: the new armored vehicles provided for the infantry. The newest division is tracked, armored, and equipped with a high-velocity cannon, heavy machine gun, and anti-tank missile launcher; it carries eight men across country with great agility at a high speed. Infantry and tanks can thus at last keep equal pace on the battlefield, and so avert that separation of the foot soldier from his armor that threatened disaster to Hitler's blitzkrieg in May 1940 and, in Russia, doomed the great advances of 1941 to stagnation.

The offensive power of the Soviet army does not reside solely in its ground equipment, but is enormously enhanced by tactical airpower. Mig 27s and Mig 23s provide the ground attack mainstay; Mig 23s are the most numerous fighters. None is quite in the class of their best NATO equivalents, the Anglo-French Jaguar and the American F-15. But the very large numbers in which they are held cancel out the marginal superiority these Allied aircraft enjoy.

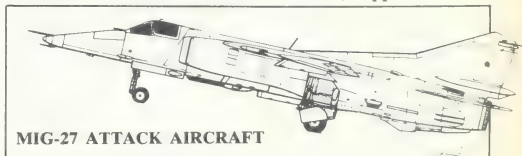
NATO's Northern Europe sector the ground attack ratio is 1,575 to 1,755 in the Pact's favor; the fighter ratio is 570 to 2,100. And protecting the Pact's planes while they are in the air, and at the same time threatening NATO aircraft that might tempt to enter the Pact's operational area, is an array of anti-aircraft guns and missiles. Every formation and unit in the Soviet army, from the front to the rear platoon, has its own issue. Since all these weapons are mobile, and many track-mounted, they are able to provide a moving envelope of air defense inside which ground units may advance.

The Soviet army, then, unquestionably possesses the equipment necessary for blitzkrieg operations. So simple, varied, and comprehensive are its systems, indeed, that the wonder is how much the Wehrmacht achieved in 1940 with only a few thousand tanks and propeller-driven aircraft, no infantry combat vehicles, and no self-propelled ground or air-defense artillery. And it is all the more alarming that the Soviet army preaches and practices the blitzkrieg doctrine in its pure form.

Marshal Malinovsky, Khrushchev's defense minister, in a statement that has since been amplified and amended but never abandoned, wrote that "the next war will be characterized by an armed struggle of unprecedented ferocity, dynamic, highly mobile combat operations, the absence of continuous table front lines or distinction between front and rear, greater opportunities for dealing surprise strikes of great strength against both troops and the deeper areas of the belligerent countries." The "surprise strikes" were then an aspiration; now they are

possible, especially since the Soviets have large numbers of troop-carrying helicopters and gunships, simultaneous lift capacity for two of the eight airborne divisions stationed in the U.S.S.R., and amphibious capacity for a naval infantry brigade that operates in the Baltic.

But the Soviet *dessant* (landing) and *redy* (raid) troops do not constitute the main threat to NATO's central front. That is posed by the prospect of strong columns of Soviet and satellite divisions, supported



MIG-27 ATTACK AIRCRAFT

by swarms of fighter and ground-attack aircraft, driving deep corridors into the tankable terrain of West Germany. It is a frightening prospect indeed. Pure blitzkrieg theory, as practiced by the Germans against France and Russia in 1940-41 and by Israel against Egypt in 1967, requires that armored spearheads push on at all costs, bypassing points of resistance, fighting only when required to make ground, and leaving the great mass of the enemy either to be quelled by follow-up troops or to succumb to despair on realizing that they are encircled.

THE ATTRACTION of blitzkrieg is that it promises an attacker victory even in circumstances where he does not outnumber his opponent, or outnumbers him by less than the three-to-one margin conventionally held necessary for success. Exactly how the balance of forces rests between NATO and the Warsaw Pact is endlessly debated. Are the satellite divisions to be allotted a value equal to that of the Soviet? What allowance has to be made for any political unreliability the satellites might display in an East-West crisis? By how much should NATO's strength be offset to take account of lack of standardization in its equipment inventory? These and a dozen other vague variables bedevil calculations. But on the face of it the Pact offers a menace of serious weight.

To oppose it, NATO presents a force far less homogeneous, both in organization and equipment. Its most important part is the United States Seventh Army, not so much because of its size, though it is the second biggest army in NATO's Central Region, but because its presence reinforces America's nuclear guarantee to Europe. How large an army, the British General Wilson inquired of his French counterpart just before the First World War, would Britain have to send to the continent as earnest of its solidarity in the event of a German invasion? "A single British soldier," came the reply, "and I will see that he is killed." Understandings between the NATO

allies are less crudely put, but the point is the same. The Seventh Army works chiefly to serve the Russians' warning that they cannot fight the Western Europeans without fighting America also.

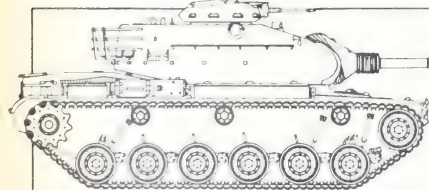
But for all that the Seventh Army is a formidable fighting force. The logic of the doctrine of "flexible response" adopted in 1967 argues that the American divisions, just as much as the British or German, must give as good or better than they get on a future battlefield. And though during the Vietnam years and their aftermath the state of the Seventh Army gave cause for anxiety, both to its leaders and allies, things have changed greatly for the better since. It is stronger and better equipped. Its artillery has always been excellent and its power is now being enhanced by the issue of target-seeking ordnance. The latest M-60 tank, itself a great improvement on the earlier model, is being replaced by the M-1 Abrams, as good as any tank in the world (no matter what its critics say) and perhaps impenetrable by any tank gun. A new Mechanized Infantry Combat Vehicle, which offers its crew superior protection and its Russian equivalent a serious threat from its high-velocity gun, is supplementing the old M-113 armored personnel carrier.

There is much else that is excellent about the Seventh Army—its air-defense capability, which at last marries superior Western guidance to lethal missiles on mobile platforms, and its surveillance, signals, and electronic warfare equipment, which are without equal. Its lines of communication are, of course, very long, but it has large war stocks in southern Germany and pre-positioned equipment for two of its home-based reinforcement divisions.

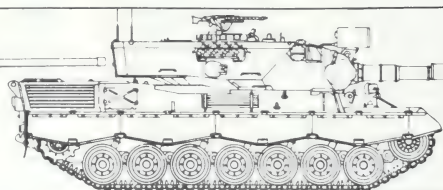
antiarmor missiles. It is supported by the small but superb Second Tactical Air Force, and, though the army's own ground formations are smaller than its generals would like, it has an efficient and well-rehearsed method of bringing reinforcements rapidly from Britain to Germany, which compensates for this drawback. It also has first-rate manpower at both soldier and officer level. The Canadian Brigade Group, in strategic reserve behind the Central Front, is of the same quality. Less combat-ready perhaps, is the Belgian corps, because of its high proportion of short-service conscripts.

This last drawback affects the Dutch and the small Danish armies even more seriously. Indeed, so nervously does the German army contemplate the Danes' ability to repel a Warsaw Pact assault on the Baltic islands that it has stationed a detached division in Schleswig-Holstein to back up the five tiny Danish brigades. Another of its missions may be to cover the deployment area of the Dutch army which, for financial reasons, keeps most of its soldiers in eastern Holland, the plan being to send them to their battle stations only when crisis impends.

Dependence on the German armed forces, the Bundeswehr, now permeates all NATO thinking. One of the ironies of European defense policy in the postwar years is that NATO was born from an effort to persuade Western Europe to defend itself against a resurgent military Germany without American assistance. The emergence of Russia rather than Germany as the real threat then obliged America to accept a permanent European role. Ultimately, it was seen that that role could only be borne if the Germans were brought to share part of the



M60A1 MBT



LEOPARD 1 MBT

Above all, the ethos of the army has dramatically changed since the low days of 1970. The old staggers of the "brown shoe army" complain that it contains too many blacks, too many high school dropouts, and too many drinkers. Their trouble may be memories too short rather than too long. All-regular armies—those composed of career soldiers rather than draftees—have always taken a high proportion of society's disadvantaged and misfits, whom they usually turn into excellent soldiers. Impartial visitors to the Seventh Army find it a good-looking force, physically fit, well-trained, gleamingly equipped, and confident in its mission.

That other all-regular army par excellence, the British, reveals similar characteristics. It also is undergoing re-equipping with new tanks, infantry combat vehicles, artillery, air-defense weapons, and

burden. That they now do, to a disproportionate extent. The German army is the backbone of NATO's ground defense. More than that, it is one of the most impressive armies in the world.

It is, in many respects, a West European version—in miniature—of the Soviet army, the result of its veterans' experience of fighting in Russia forty years ago. Thus its panzer and panzergrenadier formations—like the Soviet tank and motor-rifle divisions—contain an almost equal mix of tanks and infantry; its artillery is equipped with a version of the *katyusha* multiple rocket launcher, whose nerve-shattering power the Wehrmacht learned to fear in the ruins of Stalingrad; its infantry is transported in a superior version of the Soviet combat vehicle; and the *Leopard* tank is among the best in the world. The manpower of the German army, in sharp con-

trast to the fashionably antimilitarist German youth of the Sixties, performs military duty with dedication and efficiency.

These ingredients provide Germany with ten superb heavy divisions, distributed along the length of the Central Front, a mountain division stationed in the Bavarian Alps, and an airborne division that acts as an emergency antitank force. But that does not exhaust the Federal Republic's armed strength. Thanks to conscription, it has manpower enough to form a reserve army—the Territorialheer—which fields the equivalent of another two divisions and twenty-four local defense brigades, as well as several hundred static defense companies trained to guard key points. Fully mobilized, the German army is therefore not far short of the strength of the Group of Soviet Forces Germany, without counting in the rest of NATO.

Repelling the attack

WHY, THEN, the acute fear of a Soviet conventional attack achieving success when the balance of forces, though certainly not to NATO's advantage, is equally not so weighted as to give the Pact that decisive three-to-one advantage? Because in a given set of circumstances—say, a blitzkrieg across the land bridge between the Danube and the north German coast—staving off a Pact assault seems less than sure. The time it would take NATO to bring the home-based American divisions—of which there are five readily available—to Europe is now calcu-

lated at three weeks. There is, therefore, a moment about two weeks after mobilization when the Pact's superiority might go as high as two to one, depending on whether it drives west with the forces it has in place or mobilizes its reserves a couple of weeks in advance. This is the "worst case" with which NATO analysts have to deal. What does it portend?

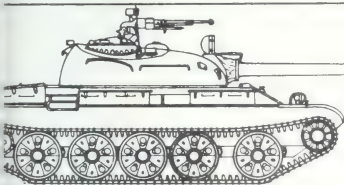
The image projected by the Soviet official literature of offensive warfare is awe-inspiring. It is of a series of drives, on widely spaced parallel axes, by large masses of armor moving at high speeds and operating without interruption, day and night alike, until breakthrough. Any one of these masses, perhaps thirty miles wide and sixty deep, would include between 1,200 and 1,400 tanks, 2,000 infantry combat vehicles, supported by between 400 and 600 self-propelled medium guns, all overflown by per-

haps forty gunship helicopters and 150 tactical aircraft. Expected speed on the march to the breakthrough point would be fifteen to twenty miles an hour and the total rate of advance, allowing for time taken to fight for the breakthrough, fifteen to twenty miles a day. Since the depth of West Germany, from the Inner German Border to the Rhine, is at most 200 miles—at its narrowest, along the famous Fulda Gap, only 120—a week would suffice to win for the Soviets a *fait accompli* before NATO's reinforcements arrived.

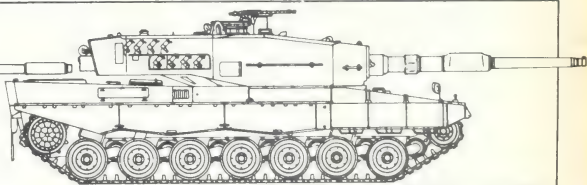
But all would depend on what happened at the chosen point of breakthrough, which Soviet doctrine holds must be narrowed to as little as five or perhaps three miles on an army's thirty-mile front, where two divisions would attack side by side, achieving superiority of as much as five to one. Such a concentration of force would certainly create a maelstrom. Would NATO's defenses buckle? That depends.

The first question—and perhaps the most important—is whether the Soviets could indeed surprise NATO's forces. Surprise dominates the military history of the twentieth century. Germany surprised France in 1914 and 1940, Russia in 1941, and the Allies, in the Ardennes, in 1944. The Allies themselves surprised the Germans in Normandy, as the Russians had at Stalingrad. In more recent years, the Israelis surprised the Egyptians in 1967 and at the Suez Canal recrossing in 1973, after the Egyptians had surprised them in return.

Now it is, of course, entirely possible that somewhere along the 400 miles of the Central Region, NATO, with only one division to guard each sixteen



SOVIET T-54B MBT



LEOPARD 1A3 MBT

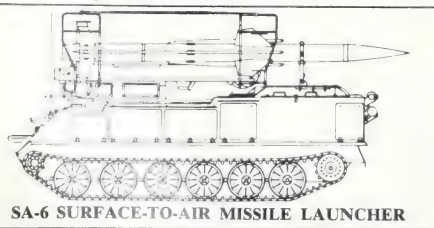
miles, has by miscalculation of risk left open a door—or doors—by which a Russian offensive thrust might enter. But here analogies with the past argue the contrary. The great opening surprises of the First and Second World wars were won either because the side attacked did not believe that an attack was coming, or because it intended to fight on its own terms elsewhere. Moreover, in 1914, 1940, and even in 1941, the decisive line of attack was adopted when the armies were widely separated by neutral territory or a thinly occupied foreign zone.

None of these conditions apply today. Politically the Cold War may be over, but militarily NATO lives in a condition of permanent semi-mobilization, which would have been regarded as the prelude to imminent war in any time before our own. It lives cheek by jowl with its antagonist, a state of affairs

that makes it extremely difficult for either side to concentrate or reinforce without the other detecting the moves. Modern intelligence-gathering has indeed brought into view Wellington's "other side of the hill," that piece of ground he said all generals would most like to observe.

The facts of geography also work to heighten a defender's chance of correctly predicting an attack. For even if an attacker succeeds in assembling forces undetected, he has still to deploy them in positions from which they can make a swift advance. Since much of the terrain along NATO's front is flat and unobstructed by water, it appears to offer many attack points, but in fact they are few, especially since the Warsaw Pact stresses the importance of speed as a means to victory. "Time has come to play not simply an important but a decisive role in the outcome of combat," runs a Soviet doctrine. And to achieve the necessary speed, all elements of the army, not merely the armor in its spearhead, must move at roughly the same pace. That requires roads, as it has always done. (The German blitzkrieg of 1940 may appear to have worked by levitation. In fact the armored columns struck very close to two major roads running between the Ardennes and the sea.)

Fast, truckworthy roads across the Inner German Border that lead in the desired direction are perhaps only three. Strategic analysts count another six secondary routes, but the presumption is that they would not be used for a main thrust. Nor is it likely that thrusts could be transferred easily from one to another. It was an axiom of Jomini, the nineteenth-century classical strategist, that lines of advance should run at right angles to one's base of operations. Crudely interpreted, that means, "Fight war in straight lines," and though there are exceptions to the rule (Patton's breakout in Normandy is one), practice has generally proved that changing a line of operations usually throws away success already won.



SA-6 SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE LAUNCHER

IF NATO were accurately to predict the Pact's lines of advance, its defensive task would be much eased, since it would then be able to match Russian concentrations with its own. And once an attacker is made to fight his rate of advance is immediately and drastically slowed. The two fastest advances of modern times, that of the

British from the Seine to Brussels in 1944 and of the Israelis across Sinai in 1967, went at a pace of thirty and thirty-six miles a day respectively. This actually exceeds the desired fifteen to twenty miles a day that the Russian textbooks lay down. But both examples were exceptional, the first because the British were not opposed at all, the second because the Israelis enjoyed total air superiority. If we look elsewhere, rates of advance are much less dramatic. In five famous offensives of the Second World War—the blitzkriegs of 1940 and 1941, the advance to Stalingrad in 1942, the Russian summer offensive of 1944, and the German Ardennes operation in the same year—the rate of advance averaged only eleven miles a day. (That, curiously, is exactly what the Germans achieved, by putting one boot in front of the other, in their invasion of France in 1914.)

Making the Pact fight would be a hair-raising business. Von Mellenthin, a leading German staff officer of the Second World War, recalled how awe-inspiring he always found the sight of "solid masses of Soviet infantry pounding forward," and a Russian armored attack would be no less spectacular. But it is important to remember that a mass is only the sum of its parts and that a Russian armored army, however large its appearance, would consist essentially of a thousand individual tank targets, each vulnerable to a single well-aimed round from a high-velocity gun or a missile launcher. Cool nerves, and determination to hold ground, make shot tell, as the Israelis demonstrated on the Golan Heights in 1973. There they destroyed 867 tanks out of the 1,400 with which the Syrians opened their offensive, all in the space of four days and with a force that never exceeded half of the Syrians' in size. In fact, for the first day the front had been held with only a hundred tanks, and despite that the Israelis surrendered only twelve miles of ground, all of which was recovered by counterattack.

Very much to the Israelis' advantage was the fact that their front had been extensively prepared for combat before the surprise attack was launched. Most of it was covered by an antitank ditch, which obliged the Syrians to use scarce and vulnerable bridge-laying tanks at the forefront. And when that had been crossed, at great loss, the Syrians found the Israeli tanks hidden behind tank ramps and other protective obstacles, which greatly heightened the difficulty of knocking them out. NATO plans to defend its Central Region in very much the same way as the Israelis defended the Golan, by forcing the enemy to traverse a deep belt of terrain occupied by small, mutually supporting antitank groups. So far it has not made any effort to cover the ground with obstacles.

Part of the reason for the omission is political: it would irritate the farmers on whose ground the obstacles were constructed, it would prompt the Russians (though they maintain formidable obsta-

les on their side of the border) to claim provocation, and above all it would exacerbate German anxieties over the permanent division of their country. Yet one suspects that a more important reason is technological. Armies, as much as any other human institution, live through self-image and fantasy. The most powerful military fantasy of the last forty years has been that of the mobile armored battle, and the earliest self-image that of the general who commands from his own tank in the center of the action. Fortifications lack glamour. Rommel is remembered and admired not for his construction of the Atlantic Wall but for his derring-do in the desert at the head of his panzers.

YET ONE WONDERS if it is not now the great armored armadas that tremble on the brink of being old-fashioned, and another form of warfare that the progress of technology is about to bless. The Soviet army, through its obsession with speed, is bound to cling to the tank as the means of winning a short war in Europe before NATO's reinforcement program represses the balance. But may it not be that it is coming to resemble one of those giant battleship avies that continued to swell in size—and cost—even as the submarine and the aircraft carrier acquired, unperceived, the means to cripple them into insignificance?

The obsolescence of the tank, and perhaps also of the combat aircraft, long bruited, may not be immediately at hand. But it hovers nearby. The Russians themselves have had to reduce the number of their tactical aircraft over the last ten years from 10,000 to 5,000, largely because even their profligate commissars balk at the purchase of machines that cost upward of \$20 million each (similar aircraft of the Second World War cost under \$50,000). Modern tanks now cost over \$2 million, and yet are to be destroyed by a missile costing less than 10,000.

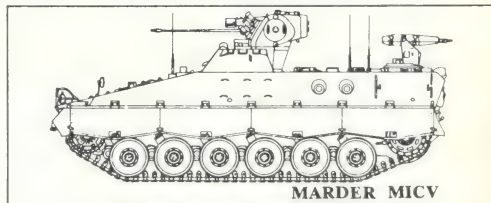
The transition from one style of warfare to another is never quick and it is always fraught with anger. But at this moment, when the stronger side as the heavier investment in what may be obsolescent armory, the risk may be worth taking. Indeed, even generals of the most traditional cast of mind now talk of the front being defended by fleets of aircraft firing salvos of precision-guided ordnance from long distance, both at military targets on the move and at the lines of communication along which they are supplied. On the ground they foresee soldiers with target-indicator lasers, which will play on tanks or combat vehicles until a missile rides their beams to the point of destruction. Overseeing all would be the wizards of electronic warfare, clearing the airwaves for their own side's transmission while discriminately jamming the other's.

All this is some way—perhaps ten or twenty years

—ahead. In the meantime, while an attack looks militarily feasible, however politically unlikely, NATO must sit things out. Much is working in its favor, not least the situation in Poland, through which run all the strategic roads, railways, and pipelines of the Group of Soviet Forces Germany. The great age and habitual hesitancy of the Soviet leadership argue against a taste for adventure, while reports of the ten Soviet divisions' operations in Afghanistan imply an indecisiveness in the field at variance with the ferocious tone of the army's official literature. Above all, the high cost of conventional weapons, together with their very slow rate of production, makes them precious—to the Soviets, perhaps, too precious to lose. The Israelis and Arabs between them lost over two years' worth of combined American and Soviet tank production in two weeks of fighting in 1973. The shock of that spree caused everyone to reconsider the picture of a future battlefield.

The Middle East example includes another important idea, often overlooked by the Americans and their allies, if not by the Russians. The Israelis accept that they live on a battlefield and fortify the frontiers accordingly. NATO, though committed to defending a frontier that is merely an arbitrary cease-fire line across a battlefield thirty-seven years old, takes no such precautions. My three German colonels, fretting in the *Kasino* over their country's diminished stature and extent, would no doubt be among the first to deplore anything so diplomatically conclusive and militarily stick-in-the-mud. Fortifications? Remember the Maginot Line. Minefields? Remember the Atlantic Wall. But remember also that the Maginot Line was never breached and that the densely dug and mined front behind the Atlantic Wall took the Allies—overwhelmingly superior in tanks and aircraft—six weeks and three great offensives to penetrate.

Any effort to solidify the Inner German Border would no doubt hurt feelings in all directions—Ger-



man, Russian, East European, indeed those of anyone committed to seeing central Europe demilitarized by diplomatic means. But since demilitarization does not seem possible, and since NATO's member states are unwilling to match Russian defense spending ruble for ruble, the best, cheapest, and most sincere affirmation of the West's intention to keep the Central Region intact would be to take a pick and shovel to it. □

ONLY COWS WERE KILLED



by Floyd C. Stuart

AT THE CREST of the hill, the maples opened up suddenly on the right, and I got one quick look at a column of smoke tumbling into the sky. It was fat and dirty yellow and climbing high fast. The road curved, dipped, and my Toyota whipped down into the valley. I was zippered up again in the August woodlots of north-central Vermont. My chin grazed the top of the steering wheel as I strained to see above the maples, but I couldn't detect even a smudge mark through rents in the foliage. We don't often see that mean kind of smoke against Vermont sky. A town dump (they call it a sanitary landfill now) might be burning off old lumber, but I thought not.

Then the road turned again, descended toward an open valley, and on the left was a long red barn spewing smoke from the far end. The farmhouse, attached to the side of the barn at the opposite end, faced the road. I slowed down. Five or six people—young men, a woman or two, some children—stood beside the barn, apart from each other, looking at flamelets flickering in the smoke, looking at each other, looking off across the road at nothing in particular. They didn't shout. They stood quietly, or walked deliberately on the tan dust of the barnyard. I guessed that no humans were trapped inside, that the cows were out to pasture, as they should be on this sunny morning, and that the fire department had been called. As I passed by slowly, a young man drove a blue tractor up to the edge of the field he had been haying and leaped off. He ran across my rear-view mirror to the barnyard.

I pulled up on a strip of lawn beside a neorustic log fence, switched off the engine, and looked at the barn a few hundred feet back. No one came around the corner of the farmhouse to watch the road from

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Morrisville. I was alone on a lovely, quiet morning. Smoke, thicker and blacker by the second, rode up the calm air. The barn crackled quickly and softly.

The mountains humped along the rim of the sky at a middling distance, enclosing not a flat valley but meadows and woodlots that follow ups and downs of debris that the last glacier dumped. The land is fertile; it doesn't tip quite so many tractors onto farmers as harsher terrain elsewhere in the state; the people are industrious. Some are poor; some are very, very rich.

It was the third week in August, when mornings have a winter snap. I had rolled up the windows as I drove out of the yard at nine to pick up my son and his friend returning from a canoe trip. My winter wood was in; last night I had split kindling until dark, dripping sweat in the chill air. We were into the season when we size up haylofts and woodpiles against the next eight months. Summer is our time for furious mending and painting and laying up. Toward the end of August, we feel a heightened sense of urgency in our lives, or self-satisfied relief. Winter, though not really our enemy, is a force we do not long forget. Contending with it, a man defines a large part of his life. But it was not winter yet, and the day was working toward the eighty or eighty-five degrees the radio promised, which is more heat than we care for in Vermont. I rolled the windows down, inviting a cross-breeze.

THE SMOKE at the rear of the barn rose several hundred feet up, blotting out the sun or letting it shine the size and color of a penny. Dirty white smoke, like raw sheep's wool and the same lumpy texture, twisted from under shingles along the entire ridgeline. Solid flame spurted out

he hayloft door and curved up into morning. It spat black bits of debris that fluttered end over end in rewind. I heard very crisply now the fire eating. A low let out a short, anguished bellow from the barn. Across the road, a herd of eighteen Holsteins and a couple of Jerseys had gathered at the two strands of wire separating the pasture and a house lot chopped out of it. The herd stared with massive intensity across a perfect lawn and a modern ranch-style home to the line of maples that began behind the L of the farmhouse and brushed their barn. I had been wrong: some cows were still in the stalls. I heard only one more time that bleat of desolation. This was no quivocal fire now but black smoke muscling slabs of orange flame that sucked and whooshed in greedy aspiration. The cows in the pasture quivered with anxiety, sensing that something catastrophic was undermining everything familiar. They seemed on the verge of stampeding to the barn. The cows and I on this side of the barn, the half dozen people I could not see on the other side—we stared at an event towering above our daily lives. The first siren elapsed up the long hill from Morrisville. The volunteers were dashing to what was probably beyond all elp.

I had parked in front of an old farmhouse converted to elegance, a common example of Vermont continuous architecture. The squarish story-and-a-half main structure rambled into a one-story summer kitchen that drifted into a woodshed, all lined up in front of the road. The old farmers liked things to connect so they could stay out of the blizzard. This house had all good clapboards, and they gleamed fresh white. Three large picture windows had been at into the walls, and the summer kitchen and woodshed were remodeled to airy rooms. A Cadillac sat in the driveway, and beside that a large station wagon. The house was much like the one where the barn was burning, except it had fine black shingles instead of a corrugated metal roof bleeding rust.

A thin blond woman in her late forties hurried down the driveway and stood by my car. She wore a white blouse and slacks, white socks, and open-toed sandals. Her fingernails resting on her crossed thighs glinted oxblood in the sun. She said a plane had crashed. Out of the corner of my eye, I had seen silhouettes move behind one picture window as figures were coming in through the back door. A husky man and several husky teenagers streamed out the front door, and broke into a lope up the hill. They all wore shorts, sport shirts, socks, and sneakers as white as their house. They made a fine sight jogging toward the black smoke of the barn.

The woman said this was their summer house. They were from Montreal. Quebecois have bought a lot of northern Vermont, and our stop signs often read "Arrête," but this woman had no French accent. I have lived a little beyond northern New England—Cleveland, Brooklyn, the Bronx—and although her accent was none of these, I recognized a rhythm,

a tonal pattern, that struck me as worldwide urban; it had the universal tinge of hardness and assertiveness that helps one survive among millions of people who live in buildings that stand up like tombstones. The woman said they had deliberately stayed over for an extra day of country peace before returning to Montreal, and now this had to happen. She told me they let the farmer whose barn was burning hay their field to keep it open. I gathered that he might be someone's tenant farmer, a common arrangement in Vermont, where often the land is owned by a hard-to-identify European or South American syndicate.

The woman was sure a plane had crashed. I said I suspected not, and told her about spontaneous combustion. The farmer had most of his hay in: every open barn door I saw was blocked with bales. "But," the lady said, "I heard an engine over there." She pointed to the field where the young man had leaped off his tractor. "It sounded very low." I did not try to pry her from her plane crash. She was used to clanging pistons, butane candles, exploding storage tanks; in our country, we fear clouds or stalks of grass that strike like matches while we work or sleep, and burn us down. My neighbor north of me on the street has not one thing from his childhood: his whole family history before his teens burned to ashes with the farm. My neighbor across the street to the east saw a lightning bolt strike his barn. His rented farm, everything he owned, turned to cinders in 1929.

The lady was very nice. She told me twice I was perfectly welcome to leave my car at her place if I wanted to walk back to the fire. The first Morrisville engine roared by, and a few private cars going fast. The volunteers were arriving, parking out of the way in yards and fields. A cop car sped by and a minute later raced back, its wind buffeting my face. Down the hill, at a crossroads beyond our sight, I knew he would set up a roadblock. The tall column of smoke rose straight up, and spread an acid gray-blue haze above the valley. The lady sniffed the air and said it was awful, awful, referring partly to her neighbor's misfortune. She went in to shut all her windows, but again welcomed me to park there.

THE ROADBLOCK was up, because a straggling line of people were hiking up the hill. Farm families in work-worn jeans, kids with soda cans, vacationers in expensive casual slacks and monogrammed shirts. A big-boned, pot-bellied man with a tiny wife stopped and took pictures. The camera clicked and whirled—smooth, assured, professional. But the white-clad people from the summer house headed home against the current. A solitary and inexplicable man in his mid-twenties, with black beard and black briefcase, walked briskly by. He looked like an insurance adjuster called in to work suddenly on Saturday morning, impatient for this

disaster to get done with so he could make his estimate and finish mowing the lawn.

Equipment began rolling in: ladder truck, pumper, yellow jeep with sexy roll bars. The ambulance, a white box with an orange slash, pulled into the yard of the farmhouse across from the fire. Men and women in orange jumpsuits flung open the rear doors, ready for business. A few of the crew seemed to be teenagers and reminded me of the son I was going to retrieve, for I had bought him the same kind of suit last year when he started to train with our town's ambulance volunteers. You could see the crew's quiet excitement: they did not want misfortune to strike, but they were glad to be invited when it did, and to do for real what they had practiced.

Water is always a problem at a country fire. Right off I had looked for the farm pond, but couldn't find it. As soon as the first truck arrived, I saw men run like hell along a ridge into a pasture. The open land diminished them; their legs scissored too fast for the distance they covered. The yellow jeep jolted out. The low ridge was the pond rim. Maybe they got a pump going, or maybe they hooked up to a tanker, I couldn't tell, but soon a hose kicked and ejected a half parabola of water onto the end of the barn. I heard axes hacking; stifled somewhere in the smoke-cotton, men were ventilating the roof. They wanted to get rid of heat and fumes so they could work. If the barn burned straight up, they might stop the fire from eating the connecting house.

Morrisville, Hyde Park, Johnson, Stowe—the towns rolled their units in. Radios crackled as dispatchers jockeyed this truck and that. A few engines were rectangular like blocks of Cabot cheese and painted lemon yellow. They had the latest yippy-yappy sirens. But in this small state of small towns, most communities make do. It was largely lean red trucks with bulky fenders and old-style sirens wailing up from Morrisville. One tanker, full, took the hill at ten miles an hour, backfiring as if it would explode. The firemen were unperturbed.

The ripe orange flames finally began to shrink after the barn was ventilated, and the smoke roiled up more efficiently. One cow down in the pasture broke for the barn and lumbered onto the lawn of the yellow ranch-style home. A thin, blue-jeaned man dashed at her from the road. She wheeled around, reluctant, turning her heft against him again and again. Another man ran onto the lawn to help. A startling aspect of fire is suddenly running figures. So much work is done slowly, methodically; men crouch at hoses; they pick and pick at clapboards with a gaff; they sit down and saw, or eye a bank of gauges. Then something gets out of hand. Men run, dribbling flat gray hose. They sprint across the lawn for cows. The Holstein revolved her wall of meat against the men, but they hollered and feinted her to the lawn's edge. They yanked up two fence stakes and drove her over the wires back to the pasture. For the moment, they had won.

AT LEAST four tank trucks kept grinding back and forth from town. The electric company sent out a truck with a hydraulic boom, and a lineman cut off current to the house. Then a red pickup hauled a long cattle van to take the nervous cows to someone else's farm. The pickup banged off the road, over the ditch, and stopped short in a sizzle of spinning tires: the tail of the van had caught on the banking. Farm kids dropped off the side of the van almost before the tires began to spin, and one ran to the blue tractor across the road. He nosed the machine into the field and gunned it toward the pickup, but everyone was shouting "No, no," and the driver saw their meaning. He jounced onto the road again, slipped the lip of the tractor's bucket loader under the van, and lifted. The pickup raced off, and the van clattered across the pasture like a bag of empty cans. These are the scenes of help we call heartwarming; they did not quite camouflage the anguish of that surprising morning.

The men fought time and their own equipment. The fire burned steadily toward the road end of the barn. And yet things were really going quite well. Flame like trickling liquid broke out along the V where the house and barn roofs joined. A fireman had cut one vent hole in the house roof, and now he crouched on a ladder hooked further along the ridge-pole, ready to cut another. He braced his boots against the rungs, held the power saw in one hand and yanked the starter cord with the other. Nothing happened. Smoke billowed out the first vent, hid him, then cleared. The line of flame where the roofs joined was pert and healthy. The man made an adjustment, pulled again, and the blade—round like a pizza cutter, but edged with wicked teeth—blurred. It stopped. Patiently, the man leaned into the awkward ladder, tuning, fiddling, coaxing the damn little cylinder into spitting alive. At last the blade whined silver and sank into the corrugated metal.

The men fought their own bodies. The ambulance had its first customer right after they vented the barn. A middle-aged man sat on the driveway, legs straight out in front of him, his back against the rear of the ambulance. They had pulled off his helmet and heavy coat, and stuck oxygen on his nose. He sat in T-shirt and enormous boots, breathing in breathing out. His belly nudged over his belt. He seemed as calm as those half dozen people who twenty minutes earlier had waited for him to come. The crew decided this one should go to the hospital and the ambulance sailed off, siren walloping, red lights erupting on all four sides. They left attendants beside a second man, who began sipping oxygen.

Trucks were parked everywhere off the fire lane. Doors hung open on empty equipment cabinets. Radios relayed terse messages: send air packs, send tankers. A ladder truck had arrived, and they raised the ladder to the loft door on the road end of the barn. The door was nearly blocked with bales of hay. A fireman perched on the end of the ladder and

ld a hose to the opening. On both sides of him d below him the wall suddenly jetted a thousand rly streamlets of smoke from every crevice in the d clapboards. Smoke like a train raging out of a nnel charged from the loft door, and the damn fool ayed put—spraying. You could see only his boot les unmoving on the rungs. Then the whole upper rrm wall puffed a solid flank of smoke, and the man as gone. None of the men below seemed to notice uch. I saw him dimly in the smoke again; he had cked off about a foot. Then flame lunged out the tire area of the loft door with the force of a blow-rch, completely enveloping the man. He mounted ain the one step to the very tip of the ladder and rayed and sprayed and sprayed for the full hour watched the fire.

The front doors of Vermont farmhouses have ver been much used, and these days many—like e front door of this house—are covered by plastic eets fastened with nail and lathe. The big-win-owed door, framed on three sides by rows of little indows, wastes heat. Fifty years ago a farmer often ough nothing of getting up thirty cords of wood eed his draughty furnace through a winter, but day we are more niggardly and try to get by on ve or six cords burned in airtight furnaces in an ulated house. Someone opened the front door and ashed away last winter's plastic. Men began carry- ing the insides of the house out, piling everything a w yards away at the foot of a large shade tree eside the road. Chairs, tables, bed frames, mattresses ounted into the lower branches. The family had to y out for everyone to see the stained, worn, ripped timacies of their daily living. Two men struggled ith a boxy avocado refrigerator, tipping it so that ftovers and half-full bottles spilled in a trail over ie grass. Firemen set up two metal frames in the ad. The frames supported canvas, and into these ools tank trucks poured water frothy with fire-re-urding chemicals. Two more hoses began to spurt.

I stood in the yard of the house across the road, ext to several cords of neatly stacked dry wood. he sun beat down, softening the road tar; heat aves shimmered from the barn; when a fireman ame over for oxygen and flung off his heavy coat, weat rolled down his naked chest in sheets. The precast said it might go down into the thirties to-ight. I stood beside the woodpile, watching tons of ay burn, wiping sweat from my forehead, com-rehending like a cow the economy of the world's iving out and grabbing back.

WATCHED the fire for an hour before leaving to meet my son and his friend. Tank trucks and the ambulance were still racing back and forth from Morrisville. The fire burned pretty much s it always had. An hour or so later, when I de-cended into the valley from the north, the two boys ere tired and quiet in the backseat. Miles off, a

broad pillar of smoke rose from the rolling fields as if to lead us home. We could not get through the roadblock beyond Morrisville, but a state cop said the dirt road on our right would eventually meet the highway again beyond the barn.

I pulled over on a rise of the dirt road. The barn had collapsed along its whole length. From a black heap black timbers jutted like broken bones. Smoke still rose as from a bombed city. A flatbed rig hauling a bulldozer crawled up the hill. They were going to rake over the burning rubble. The line of maples, not having caught fire and having no red barn to stand before, were outlined branch by branch in midday light. Two chimneys still stood along a roof-line. It seemed as if the firemen might save the house.

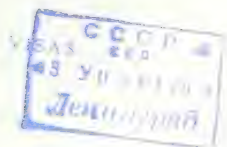
The fire was no big deal. Only cows were killed. Later I would learn spontaneous combustion burned down two barns in Vermont that day; together they earned a couple of inches inside the Sunday paper. Over toward Stowe, a tow plane tugged a slim-winged glider toward the thermals, where it could swoop and climb in spirals among upwelling shafts of heated air. Before tomorrow, a new wind would sweep the valley clear. The family would lug their lives back in the house from under the shade tree. They would nail temporary plastic over the vent holes in the roof, and smell smoke for years.

When the fire was at its height, I happened to be near the petite lady, who was talking to her husband. His camera rested on his belly, the black lens protruding like a navel. She was in trim blue slacks, her glass frames winked with bits of jewel, and she perched like a sparrow on tiny side-by-side feet. She said they should let the whole thing go. It was no use. And men might get hurt.

Earlier I had watched a fireman in his fifties breathe oxygen a while, then shrug on his rubber coat and trudge back to the barn. Now, as the petite lady spoke, he crossed the road again, supported by the arms of friends but still walking on his own saggy legs. They stripped off his coat, and young people on the ambulance crew hitched him up to oxygen.

The fireman, wobbling on his feet and pasty white, finally sat down heavily like Jacob when his hip gave out. The man had gone into the smoke-filled barn until his chest seized up. He did not have to drag trapped people out from the roiling dark. Maybe he wanted to save a barn because it was impossible, because it is never too late. Maybe he was half thinking of the queer relationship between the spirit and its things. We are comforted by the hum of an avocado refrigerator and by the years' accommodation a mattress has made to our lovemaking and sleeping bones. These, too, must be saved.

Sitting on the grass by the ambulance, the fireman looked terribly ill and peaceful. He breathed in. He breathed out. The petite lady looked across the road. He breathed in. His respiration isolated, moment by moment, each thing as it really mattered. It was a gift of order to a morning gone awry. □



Tales of the Vienna Airport

The difference between a refugee from oppression and an illégal alien is . . . well, it's hard to say.

by Joseph Nocera

LATE LAST JANUARY, on a typically cold, blustery, winter morning in Vienna, a young Russian stepped off an airplane that had just arrived from Moscow. He wore a long beige woolen coat, and one of those large furry hats Russians wear, and his most distinctive feature was his bright-red, full-length beard. He did not look especially different, except in age, from the other Russians on the plane. But he was different. For one thing, he was not traveling alone, as the other men were, but had five members of his family with him—his wife, sister-in-law, mother-in-law, and two small children. For another, his luggage consisted of at least a dozen large suitcases, enough to carry all the family's worldly possessions (which they undoubtedly contained). No, this was not some party hack being rewarded for loyal service with a trip to the West. This man and his family were Soviet Jews. At the moment they got off that plane, in the rendered judgment of the American government, they were refugees.

Not everyone who took an interest in this man (let's call him Yuri*) and his family shared in that assessment. The Russians certainly didn't—in Russia they were simply traitors, their traitorous act having been to request permission to leave the motherland. Like all Soviet émigrés, these six people had been stripped of their Soviet citizenship before being allowed to leave the country. More to the point, the Israeli government did not believe that Yuri and his family were real refugees either, since they already had a free country that claimed their allegiance—namely, Israel. Hence: a policy dispute, with America (and Austria) on one side, and Israel on the other. A nasty one, too, as anyone who has been to Vienna lately can attest. The American decision to classify Soviet Jews as refugees makes Israel very

angry; and since last summer, when the issue finally burst into public, that anger has been on raw display in Vienna. The reason Israel takes this semantic distinction so seriously is that it has serious, real consequences. In the case of Yuri and his family, it meant that even though they were Jews carrying Israeli visas, and even though Israel desperately wanted them, and even though Vienna was only supposed to be a transit station on the way to Israel, there was no certainty that they would ever even see Israel. Instead, all they had to do to avoid the Jewish state was simply to announce, on arriving in Vienna, that they intended to emigrate to America. If Yuri were to do that, this country would take in him and his family with a minimum of fuss and wait—the great benefit of having America classify you as a “refugee.”

WHEN I first caught sight of Yuri and his family, they had just walked into the baggage area of Vienna's airport. They seemed utterly confused, and still a little dazed at their first glimpse of the West. No one seemed to be paying much attention to them, except for a lone Austrian soldier who was cradling a small, but extremely lethal-looking, machine gun. Though he said nothing to the family, and stayed a discreet ten feet away, he was obviously guarding them. Within a few minutes, though, two other people entered the baggage area and headed for the family—an efficient-looking young man, and a white-haired, matronly woman. As they got closer, the woman suddenly hung back, thus allowing the man to greet them alone. He was effusively friendly and ostentatiously helpful. He shook Yuri's hand, patted him on the back, and winked and smiled at the little children. He kept up a steady stream of friendly

* Yuri did not want his real name used out of fear for relatives left behind in the Soviet Union.

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latter—in Russian, of course—as he led the family over to the ramp where the suitcases would be unloaded. He found a cart for them, and piled on the bags as they came off the ramp. Then he began to lead the family out of the baggage section and into the lobby. And that's when Yuri stopped him. I do not speak Russian, so I cannot tell you exactly what he said. But it didn't take a linguist to understand the gist. The man wore a badge identifying himself as a representative from the Jewish Agency, the quasi-governmental organization that handles Israeli immigration and resettlement; what Yuri was quite early telling him was that he and his family were not going to Israel. Friends of his in the U.S. had arranged for an American refugee agency—Rav Tov—to pick him up at the airport. Rav Tov is run by an orthodox Jewish sect in New York that opposes the existence of Israel, on the grounds that Jews should not return to the Holy Land before the Messiah arrives. This eccentric group and its cause are quite obscure in America, but well known at the Vienna airport and in Russia. Yuri and his family had sent telegrams to Rav Tov. It was all arranged.

The unwritten choreography of the Vienna airport minutely calls for the person from the Jewish Agency to be given first crack at any new emigré from the Soviet Union. He had had his shot, and had been turned down, so now the white-haired woman moved into the picture. She, it turned out, as the Rav Tov representative, and she did indeed have a telegram from Yuri's friends in her possession. At this point, the man from the Jewish Agency, seeing that there was nothing he could do, walked humbly away, and the woman took over. She led the family into the lobby, around a corner, and out a side door where a red van was parked. She watched the driver of the van pack the bags into the back. He smiled graciously as Yuri thanked her again and again. Then everyone except the woman got into the van and drove off. The driver would take them to a small rooming house in Vienna where Rav Tov puts up most of its Soviet Jews. Eight days later, the family would be in Rome, where they would be processed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and sometime after that—usually a matter of several months—they would fly to America to start their new lives.

This little scene I witnessed has taken place hundreds of times in Vienna during the past few years. In the beginning (about 1969), when the Soviet Union first started allowing some of its Jewish population to emigrate, nearly all the emigrés went to Israel. As late as 1973, a year in which some 35,000 Jews left Russia, only 4.2 percent chose not to go to Israel. Since then, however, that percentage has steadily increased—37 percent by 1975; 58 percent by 1978; 65 percent by 1980; and fully 81 percent last year. Of the 250,000 or so Jews who have left the Soviet Union, it is generally estimated that about 100,000 of them have spurned Israel for other coun-

tries—Canada, Australia, and (for the vast majority) America.

Israel has a term for such people; it calls them, disparagingly, "dropouts." And as the dropout rate has risen—while, at the same time, the number of emigrants from Russia has dropped drastically, from a high of 50,000 in 1979 to less than 10,000 last year—Israel has become increasingly agitated about the problem. *It wants those Jews.* It needs them. It feels it has a right to them. But because of American refugee policy, it can't have them—not unless they themselves feel strongly enough about the state of Israel to want to live there. These days, obviously, not many do. Why don't they? you ask. The reason so many Soviet Jews are choosing America over Israel should come as no great surprise, in fact. They think, for any number of reasons, that life will be better for them in America. It is a perfectly logical, perfectly rational choice; most of us, faced with the same choice, would probably do the same thing.

But this perfectly rational choice raises problems, both practical and theoretical, for American immigration policy. Anyone in his or her right mind would rather live in America than in Russia, and would rather live in Israel than in Russia. It is certainly understandable that someone would prefer to live in the United States, a prosperous and secure country, than in Israel, still a struggling pioneer nation. But people in this world cannot live wherever they want. How many would flee Russia if they could? How many would come to America from Russia and elsewhere?

The aspirations of the Jews now leaving Russia, natural and commendable though they may be, have little to do with any desire to embrace the Jewish religion and cultural heritage, even though this is ostensibly why we let them into the U.S. In fact, their aspirations are not very different from the aspirations of other groups. Haitians, for instance. How is the Soviet emigré with an Israeli visa different from the Haitian emigré with no visa? How does one get labeled "refugee"—and thus get welcomed and embraced in this country—and the other get labeled "illegal alien"—and thus get told to go back to where he came from? Are fair rules at work? Are fair rules even possible?

VIENNA is the refugee capital of the Western world, and has been since the end of World War II. It has come to this role not through conscious choice, but because of geography; it is the closest Western city to the Eastern-bloc countries. In 1956, after the Hungarian uprising, 200,000 Hungarians streamed across the border into Austria. Most of the Hungarians were resettled successfully, and Austria's reputation as "a country of asylum" (as its government likes to call itself) was established.

Over the years, Eastern-bloc refugees have con-

tinued to come to Vienna in large numbers. In 1968 there were the Czechs—about 100,000 of them. Also in the late 1960s, thousands of Polish Jews fled to Vienna after an upsurge of anti-Semitism in Poland. Now there is a new influx of Poles—50,000 of them, according to the Austrian government, currently housed in Vienna and Traiskirchen, a small town about twenty miles south of Vienna where one of the largest Austrian refugee camps is located. You see them everywhere in Vienna these days, walking through streets in groups of five and ten, all of them carrying small plastic bags (a sure sign of a recent refugee), or milling around one of the half-dozen refugee agencies in Vienna, waiting to find out if there is anything new in their "case." They flock to the local Polish-Catholic church, where they can not only attend Mass but also sip tea in the church hall afterward and hear the latest about events in Poland. All these people left Poland before martial law was declared (many of them, in fact, have been in Austria eight months to a year), and almost all of them now have high hopes that the imposition of martial law will give them their chance to emigrate to some Western country, especially the United States. In other words, they are hoping that the increased oppression back in Poland will move some bureaucratic gear in the American government, and get them classified as "refugees" rather than mere potential immigrants.

Although the Austrians are not exactly euphoric about their country being a haven for refugees, they accept their role with a good deal more grace than, say, the Thais. No one is pushed back across the borders. Austria is fairly reluctant to resettle refugees in Austria itself, generally doing so only after three other countries have turned a person down, and even then charging most of the resettlement cost to the American government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). But Austria does take in just about everybody who asks for asylum, and keeps them until they are resettled in some other country. The refugee camps at places like Traiskirchen may look like nineteenth-century housing projects, but everyone is housed and fed and, if need be, clothed as well.

Thus when the Soviets first began granting exit visas to Jews in the late 1960s, it was only natural that they should be sent to Vienna. The Soviet Union has had no diplomatic relations with Israel since the 1967 Six Day War, and they weren't about to fly Jews directly to Israel. Vienna must have seemed the next most logical place. As to why the Russians began allowing some Soviet Jews to emigrate, well, no one knows for sure what moves the Russians to do anything. But just about everyone—Israelis included—agrees that it was mainly due to American pressure. The late 1960s and early 1970s, you may remember, were the era of détente. For years, American politicians like Sen. Henry Jackson had been calling on the Russians to allow Soviet Jews to

emigrate; now that people were talking about détente, Jackson demanded that the American government link détente to Jewish emigration. The Soviet Union, it seems safe to say, saw its own Jewish population as pawns in this international chess game and seeing the lucrative possibilities for American trade and American credits, decided that the time was right to sacrifice a few of those pawns.

AT FIRST there were not too many problems and the transfer of Soviet Jews from Russia to Israel was handled fairly straightforwardly. The Austrian authorities set aside a special transit camp for Soviet Jews on the outskirts of Vienna—a place called Schönau Castle—and turned the running of that facility over to the Jewish Agency. With extremely rare exceptions, those first emigrés were the ones who had put most on the line to get out of Russia. They were the ones who had raised the outcry within Russia that had caught the attention of people like Henry Jackson and Jacob Javits. These first emigrés were almost all ardent Zionists and, without question, many of them had been persecuted in Russia for the strong beliefs they held. But also because of those beliefs there was no dispute over where they should go once they hit Austrian soil. Israel was what they wanted, and Israel was what they got.

On September 28, 1973, however, everything changed for the Austrian government. On that day, as *The New York Times* reported, "Two armed Arab guerrillas raided a Moscow-to-Vienna train . . . kidnapped three Soviet Jews and an Austrian customs official, and took them to the Vienna airport." This terrorist attack was not a total surprise. Twice in early 1973, the governments of Austria and then Italy had intercepted Arabs who were suspected of having terrorist designs on Schönau Castle; there had been several earlier warnings. When the attack finally came, the two terrorists did not hold their hostages very long—about sixteen hours in all—and there was no bloodshed. But then there wasn't any need for bloodshed. The Austrian government almost immediately capitulated to the key demand of the terrorists, which was—surprise, surprise—that the Schönau transit facility be closed down for good. Having agreed to do this, the Austrians then made a plane available to the terrorists, and off they went to their next engagement.

The reaction was about what you would expect: Israeli outrage, American anguish, Arab glee. For a few days the affair was chewed over prominently in Western newspapers, but soon enough the story of the Schönau closing dropped off page one, and then out of the papers entirely. So what never got reported was this: although the Austrians had caved in, they really *hadn't* caved in. After the Schönau facility was locked up, the Austrians simply set up a new transit station for Soviet Jews, this time within the

city limits of Vienna. This new facility was much smaller—with room for only about 300 refugees—and was heavily protected. At the same time, though, the Austrian government's whole attitude toward the Soviet Jewish emigrés seemed to change. They didn't talk much about the Jews in transit anymore. They certainly didn't let reporters enter the new facility. It seemed that they were trying to put at least some distance between themselves and the Soviet Jews.

The Austrians are not the only ones basing their government policy about Soviet Jews on cherished fictions. So are all of the other three governments involved: the Soviets, the Israelis, and the Americans. Soviet Jewish emigration, though it didn't start out his way, is today largely built on these fictions. The whole fragile system that has evolved over the years could collapse if the three governments ever started being honest. Luckily, this does not appear likely at any time soon. The most preposterous fiction, and the one that has been in place right from the start, is...

THE SOVIET FICTION. When the Soviets first started allowing a trickle of Jewish emigration in the late 1960s, no one really expected them to say they were doing it because of external pressure. And they didn't. Instead, they said they were basing this new policy on the humane and worthy goal of "family reunification." Family reunification is a worthy goal, of course. Most of the nations of the world, for instance—the Soviet Union included—signed the 1975 Helsinki Accord mandating the principle of family reunification. Not that all the nations that have signed the Accords actually honor them, but at least "family reunification" is an internationally accepted standard. For the Soviets, who have historically viewed emigration as treachery, it is a useful face-saving device.

The way this translates into Soviet policy is that every Soviet Jew who wishes to emigrate must first obtain something called a *vyzov*—an invitation from a relative already living in Israel. The *vyzov* must come from Israel. This implies, of course, that all the Jewish emigrés are going to move to Israel to join their relatives. More than implies, actually; the other tenet of Soviet emigration policy is that all departing Jews are Zionists who want to be a part of the Jewish state. This is another little fiction.

Many of those wanting to leave don't have relatives in Israel, and most recent leavers have no intention of moving there. But this is not much of a problem. "*Vyzovs*," one emigré told me, "are very, very easy to get." When I asked this person—and others—how they obtained *vyzovs*, most of them just chuckled. "Oh, there are ways to do it," one said. What happens, obviously, is that nonrelatives in Israel send the *vyzov*. Our friend Yuri, for instance, had friends who were emigrating to Israel;

before they left he asked them to send him a *vyzov*, and they did. That is how it has been done for years. The Israelis haven't cared, since the whole point was simply to get people to come to Israel. A notarized statement claiming that you were a relative was all it took to get the Israeli bureaucracy to issue you a *vyzov*. "We do not do background checks," a woman from the Jewish Agency told me. "What sort of a country do you think Israel is?" The Soviets, meanwhile, their bureaucratic requirements satisfied, were generally willing to look the other way—except on those occasions when they were looking for an excuse to keep someone from emigrating. Lately, I'm told, because the Israelis are so miffed at the high dropout rate, they have begun cracking down on *vyzovs*. And I'm also told that since 1980, when it began to shut off the emigration spigot, Russian bureaucrats have increasingly been using these fraudulent *vyzovs* as their basis for refusing someone permission to emigrate.

Obtaining the *vyzov* is the easy part. The next step is to hand the *vyzov* in to the authorities and, in so doing, actually to request permission to emigrate to Israel. The difficulty is more psychological than anything else. Because of the arbitrary nature of Russian bureaucracy, you never know how it's going to react to your request. You may lose your job, or be demoted, though this is no longer the rule but the exception. You may be refused, or have to wait years for your exit visa to come through. While I don't mean to underestimate any of these problems, the truth is that in recent years the average wait has been three months, and relatively painless. (Though this may be changing again, since the Soviets have been letting out fewer emigrants ever since the Afghanistan invasion.) Once permission to leave is granted, the Soviet Jew goes to the Dutch embassy, which handles Israel's interests in Russia, and gets his Israeli visa. This is the last little fraud in this series of bureaucratic frauds, since it signifies that the emigrés are indeed heading for Israel. Of course, since the mid-1970s, most of them have had no intention whatsoever of going to Israel. Which brings us to...

THE ISRAELI FICTION. It's not easy to gain entrance to the Jewish Agency's headquarters in Vienna. As with most Israeli-connected organizations, security is extremely tight. Bags are searched, papers are looked through, proof must be proffered that you are who you say you are. But if you're a reporter, eventually you get in, because the Jewish Agency has a point it wants to make in the American press. The point is: people with Israeli visas should go to Israel.

Back in 1973, something happened in Vienna (and a few other European cities) that, in retrospect, was vastly more important than a sixteen-hour hostage-taking. That year, some of the Russian

emigrés who had gone to Israel began trickling back to Western Europe. Some of them wanted only to get back to Russia, but many others apparently expected that they would be quickly snapped up by the U.S. or some other country. Such was not the case, however, because these people were no longer considered refugees. Now that they had Israeli citizenship, everything was different. The refugee agencies in Vienna would not touch them; and as for getting into America, they were told that as Israeli citizens they would have to apply under normal immigration procedures—the refugee bypass was now permanently closed to them. Under these circumstances, they could wait for years to get into the U.S., if, indeed, they were deemed eligible at all. The upshot was that these people were stuck in Vienna (and Rome, where some of them also went). With not much else to do, they began telling anyone who would listen how miserable they had been in Israel. They complained that they couldn't find decent jobs in their profession; that they had been forced to live in cities not to their liking and away from their friends; that the culture there had been strange and frightening and non-European; that the weather was too hot; and even that Israel had made it difficult for them to leave.

Israel denied these complaints, but these stranded Soviet Jews—and others still in Israel, who were writing letters to friends in Russia listing the same catalogue of grievances—had a major effect. Emigrés started thinking that they would be better off in America instead; in 1974, the dropout rate shot up from 4.2 percent to almost 19 percent, and it's been going up ever since.

At first, Israel reacted by trying to fight fire with fire. It set up its own propaganda apparatus designed to persuade the emigrés that Israel wasn't so bad after all. In the camp in Vienna, it showed films and passed around glossy brochures and gave presentations about life in Israel during dinner. In Rome, where Soviet Jews going to America are processed by INS, the Israelis set up Jewish clubs in the neighborhoods where the Soviet Jews lived. The people running these clubs also tried to persuade the emigrés to change their minds and go to Israel instead. None of this was particularly successful, for obvious reasons. "When you live in Russia," says one recent emigré, "you learn not to trust propaganda like this. So we didn't trust it. And besides," she adds, "when you see these Jews in Rome who left Israel, and you see how miserable they are, and you realize that despite their condition they are unwilling to return to Israel, you start to wonder. It makes you think that Israel must be a very bad place to live."

As long as the numbers were going up, however, Israel was willing to live with the situation. Despite the increasing dropout rate, after all, it was still getting a fair number of new immigrants. In 1979, for instance, 17,600 Soviet Jews went to Israel, even though the dropout rate that year was over 60 per-

cent. (That was the Soviet Union's most liberal emigration year—it let out more than 50,000 Jews. By 1981, though, emigration was below 10,000 at the dropout rate was above 80 percent; that year Israel got only 1,784 new citizens. And that's why the Jewish Agency in Vienna decided that it would have to take drastic measures.

Last August, the Jewish Agency announced that it would no longer cooperate as freely as it had in the past with HIAS (the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) and other American refugee agencies. In the past, all Soviet Jews were taken to the Red Cross camp, and then the Jewish Agency sorted out those who were headed for Israel and those who preferred America, turning over the majority of the America-bound refugees to HIAS, the most established agency. Now, it declared, only those refugees with close relatives in America—parents, children, or spouse brothers and sisters didn't count—would be handed over.

This new policy did not go over well with either the Americans or the Austrians, but the Jewish Agency stuck to its guns. Over the next few months those Soviet Jews who declared for America were simply evicted from the camp. (The Jewish Agency denies having evicted anyone, but everyone else talked to in Vienna says that it happened regularly. These Jews were not abandoned for long, since most of them were picked up either by HIAS or by Rav Tov, and they eventually did get to America. But the policy did seem a bit, well, callous, and it was causing headaches for the Austrian police.

So in December, the Austrians struck back. On the wall outside the transit facility, they posted the names, addresses, and phone numbers of every independent refugee agency in Vienna. Now it was the Jewish Agency's turn to be publicly outraged; it charged that the new notice had been put up by Austria for the sole intention of persuading Soviet Jews to avoid Israel. To which Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky (a Jew notoriously hostile to Israel) snidely replied: "It is not the responsibility of Austria to promote immigration to Israel. If 80 percent choose to go elsewhere, they probably have a good reason."

Meanwhile... back in Israel, Prime Minister Menachem Begin met with HIAS directors and hammered out a small compromise. Under its terms HIAS agreed, for a three-month trial period, to process only those Soviet Jews with close relatives in the U.S. As of this writing, the trial period is drawing to a close, and no one at HIAS is saying whether or not it will be continued. But the truth is that it hasn't had much effect. The dropout rate has fallen only slightly; and the Austrian government now insists on making sure that every Soviet Jew at the transit camp reads a flyer spelling out his or her options. The main beneficiary of the furor has been Rav Tov. It is Rav Tov that now scours the Vienna airport and train station in search of Soviet Jews

to want to go to America—and most of the time gets them. This has done wonders for Rav Tov's dget. Like all refugee agencies in Vienna, it receives \$1,000 in resettlement costs from the U.S. government for each Soviet Jewish refugee it adopts. More important than the money, though, the latest developments have given Rav Tov a sense of respectability it didn't have before. Within the Russian Jewish community, the word is out: Rav Tov, formerly on the fringe of the refugee subculture in Vienna, now the agency to seek out. They may be a bunch of religious maniacs, but they can get you out of the clutches of the Jewish Agency, and besides, if you don't like them, you can always switch to HIAS since you're in Rome. In Russia, information like this travels very fast among Jews.

Israel has taken to these desperate (if largely futile) measures because it needs bodies—Jewish bodies—not just to defend itself from its enemies but to build the kind of society it wants to build. For a country whose sense of self is wrapped up in the idea that idealistic Jews will want to "return," it is painful to face the reality that today more people are leaving Israel than are joining it. It is especially painful to see a whole corps of potential immigrants slipping out of Israel's grasp in Vienna.

Israel has constructed a number of arguments to stify the measures it has taken in Vienna. These arguments constitute the Israeli fiction.

One half of the argument is that these émigrés would be expected to go to Israel because they hold Israeli visas. "Israel is a free, democratic country," the woman at the Jewish Agency told me emphatically. "If they come and don't like it, they can leave. They can go anywhere they want. But if they have an Israeli visa, they should come to Israel first. I know of no other situation in the world where people emigrating to one democratic country are allowed to change their minds in midstream and go to another democratic country instead." The hole in that argument, as we've seen before, is that Russian Jews don't have any choice in the matter when they're still in Russia. They must either accept an Israeli visa, or they don't get out of the country. (One American consular official who worked in Moscow in 1979 told me that of the 50,000 Jews who left the country that year, exactly 300 were processed by the American embassy in Moscow. The rest went by the usual Dutch embassy-Israeli visa route.) Under these circumstances, then, it seems specious to say that because these people were forced to accept Israeli visas, they should be forced to live in Israel. It is even more specious to suggest that Soviet Jews can just up and leave if they don't like Israel. They may be able to leave, but once they've touched Israeli soil they've really got no place else to go.

The Jewish Agency makes a second argument. They say that the high dropout rate is why the Soviets have cut back on Jewish emigration in the last few years. It was put to me like this: "The Russians

don't like to be made fools of, and when they see all these people with Israeli visas going instead to America, this upsets the Kremlin. That is why they are cutting back." The Russians actually do say this, but they're obviously lying. Kremlin foreign policy makers, concerned about maintaining friendly relations with Israel's enemies in the Arab world, have no interest in seeing emigrating Jews go to Israel instead of America. In one place, the new immigrant is a potential soldier in the Israeli army and maker of a successful free society; in the other, he's a potential user of imported oil and a potential embarrassment to the Jewish state. The Soviet insistence on Israeli visas for outgoing Jews has internal, ideological roots. Virtually everyone concerned with Jewish emigration from Russia—with the sole exception of the Israelis—agrees that exit visas fluctuate according to the state of Washington-Moscow relations; this is the Russian version of linkage. Because those relations are at a particularly low point right now, so is the number of exiting Jews. (Only 3,500 Jews are expected to get out of the Soviet Union in 1982.)

Israel has one more argument, a strong but ironic one for the Jewish state. Israel complains that American policy gives the Russian Jews a deal that it gives to virtually no other class of people in the world. Simply by the fact that they are Soviet Jews, there is this door open to them to America—no wait, no anguish, no messy paperwork. "How can your government define these people as refugees?" said the woman at the Jewish Agency. It is a good question, and it inevitably leads to . . .

THE AMERICAN FICTION. In 1980, the Congress passed and President Carter signed into law a comprehensive refugee reform bill. The bill's language dealt mostly with the mechanics of the refugee process, but its underlying thesis was larger than that. It was the first real attempt to bring some coherence and above all some fairness to the business of admitting refugees into the United States. Gone, for instance, were previous provisions in which those fleeing communist countries automatically got the cherished "refugee" status, while those fleeing other styles of oppression did not. The new definition was much more in line with the internationally recognized standard of refugee that was first established by the United Nations in 1951. It said simply that a refugee was someone who could not return to his own country "because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion." The crucial distinction in the new law, then, is between those fleeing for political reasons, and those whose motivation is primarily economic: a simple wish for a better life.

The situation in Vienna, however, shows how il-

lusive fairness can be. The Israelis are right: this country gives people fleeing Russia special consideration. (These include not only Jews, but certain other ethnic minorities, like Soviet Armenians, whom the Russians have allowed to emigrate.) If we were to classify Soviet Jews as potential immigrants, they would have to stand in line along with everyone else. If they had relatives in the U.S., or if they had special skills the U.S. considered valuable, they would eventually get in, since those are the things on which U.S. immigration law is based. If they didn't, well, they would have to go to Israel to live. There are a lot worse fates in this world.

Instead, we call them—as a class—"refugees," which effectively puts them outside the immigration quota system. If the word "refugee" conjures up in your mind images of the Cuban flotilla, or Vietnamese boat people, or Cambodians eking out a meager existence in some godforsaken Thai refugee camp, or even some Soviet Jew being hounded out of the country after years in the Gulag, that's good. That's what the term is supposed to mean. But most Soviet Jews simply don't fit this description. The great American fiction is that they do.

We maintain this fiction for three reasons. First, the policy reason. Government policy holds that it is a noxious thing that Soviet Jews are *forced* to take Israeli visas. "It's a question," one U.S. official in Vienna told me, "of freedom of choice. If they can't have freedom of choice inside Russia, we think they should have it once they're outside the country." The Soviet practice is noxious, though perhaps not as noxious as their practice of not giving exit visas at all to most citizens. Similarly, freedom of choice is a fine thing—but we do not offer this freedom to everyone who wishes to come to the United States.

The second reason is political. Henry Jackson still cares—a lot—about what happens to Soviet Jews, and so do many of his colleagues in Congress. Certainly that's a good thing in the sense that it lets the Soviets know that the pressure is still on. But it brings a concomitant pressure on people in the State Department and the INS to treat emigrating Soviet Jews with kid gloves. So what if they're not "real" refugees? The fact is, as my friend who worked in Moscow once explained to me, "we would never dare tell a Soviet Jew he couldn't come to America. Can you imagine the congressional outcry?" The irony here is that much of the past pressure put on the Soviets by Jackson and others (particularly the famous Jackson-Vanik amendment, which linked the emigration issue to favored trade status for Russia) was aimed at letting Soviet Jews get to Israel. Once the emigrés found out, however, that they could go to America instead, no one on our side was going to tell them no, Henry Jackson included.

The last reason is an uncomfortable misunderstanding about what life is like in Russia for Soviet

Jews. The notion that Soviet Jews face a great deal of persecution by the state for their race and beliefs has not been created out of whole cloth. The Stalinist purges and pogroms were very real, as is the anti-Semitism that exists today in Russia is also real. And some people are severely persecuted to day—the 4,000 "refuseniks," for example, who have applied to emigrate and been turned down by the state. Or the headline cases that get reported in the newspapers, like that of Aleksandr Lerner, the computer scientist who lost everything he had when he applied to emigrate. But these repugnant cases tend to obscure something equally true about life in Russia today: that most Jews who want to emigrate are not dissidents or refuseniks. They are not even religious—sixty-five years of ruthless secularization have taken care of that—and they have no desire to become so. They are not leaving because the face religious persecution. They are leaving in part because they suffer from ethnic prejudice, but primarily because life in Russia is hard for everyone—Jews included—and, unlike most others, they have an escape hatch. In short, they are leaving because they can get out. The Soviet Jews themselves will be the first to admit, if you ask them, that they leave Russia for reasons that have very little to do with "political persecution" and a great deal to do with wanting to find a better life for themselves and their children somewhere else.

CONSIDER again our friend Yuri, the fellow at the airport. A few days after he arrived in Vienna I was able to talk to him, and he explained what his situation had been in Russia. He is twenty-four and was living with his wife and family in Soviet Georgia. "I was a programming engineer," he said, "but I was not happy in that job because I had been trained as a physicist." He felt strongly that he had not received a job in his field because he was a Jew (he was probably right about that), and he also thought that his Jewishness had been a factor in his not getting into the university of his choice, the University of Moscow. His chief reasons for leaving, though, were economic: "I had a big family, and I wasn't making very much money. I couldn't make ends meet." As to why he preferred the U.S. over Israel, this too was a pragmatic matter: "I want to go to a good university to further my studies, and the best schools are in the U.S. Also, I want to get a good job, and I know from friends in Israel how difficult it is to get a good job there." It took him, he said, about two months to get his exit visas after he had applied to emigrate, and during that time he was allowed to keep his job and finish up a project he had been working on. "In Georgia, where I lived, things are different for Jews. Things are better for Jews in Georgia," he said.

What Yuri told me about his motivations and am

tions is true for thousands of others. It is especially true for those Soviets who pick the U.S. over rael. Studies show it. Most of the people I talked who actually deal with these emigrés will admit. And, to test the perceptions I had gained in Vienna, I attended a round-table discussion with ten Soviet Jews—all of whom had come to this country within the past three years—when I returned to the U.S. Their comments echoed what I had heard in Vienna. They all talked about facing anti-Semitism in Russia, meaning economic discrimination. They had a university education, but not in the best schools; they had decent jobs, but not ones as good as they felt their talents justified. Their children are facing the same problem in their school life. One of them yearned to leave Russia because of burning desire to recapture their religion or their Jewish heritage. Most of them told me that it was not anti-Semitism alone that propelled them out of Russia. "What makes you think that it is only the Jews who are unhappy in Russia?" said one man. "Everyone is unhappy. If they could leave, they would. In 1970, when we first started getting out," the man added, "all of a sudden my friends were jealous of me because I was a Jew. It meant that someday I might be able to escape, while they would still be stuck in Russia." As he said that, the others nodded in agreement. When I asked them all why they had chosen America instead of Israel, they listed all the old complaints. They had heard all of them, not via Soviet propaganda (as Israel claims) but through letters from friends and eyewitness accounts in Rome. "It is too hard in Israel," said one man. Most of the others explained that in terms of their opportunities in life, there was simply no comparison between the two countries; Israel is small and limited in what it can offer, America is huge and seems limitless. They could make more money in America, and their children could get a better education. And another reason, too: if they came to America, and didn't like it, they could always try someplace else—like Israel. If they moved to Israel, they knew it would be much more difficult to change countries if they concluded that they had made a mistake. So in that sense, coming to America was a way of keeping their options open.

All of these are perfectly valid reasons for wanting to emigrate to America. But they are also, to be honest about it, economic reasons. These people are coming to America *because they want to better their lives*.

THERE IS no need to wish the Soviet Jews anything but well, and there is no need to wish them anywhere but where they wish to be, including the United States. But there is no need to think again about, for example, those Haitians, and about the moral and practical problems of trying to rest an immigration policy on the

difference between economic and political motivations. Take the practical problems first. A Haitian boat person who told an interrogator from the Immigration and Naturalization Service what that group of Russian Jews in Brooklyn told me about why they liked America—admirable sentiments all—would quickly find himself on a slow boat back to Baby Doc. Obviously, people's motives are mixed. In the case of Soviet Jews, their reasons for preferring the West over Russia are at least partly economic, and their reasons for preferring America over Israel obviously have nothing to do with political or religious oppression.

The moral distinction is similarly blurry. Is a political emigré necessarily more desperate, and more deserving, than an economic one? Would you rather be a Jew in the Soviet Union today—even a religious Jew prevented from worshipping, a bright student turned down from Moscow University because of his last name, a physicist forced to work as a computer engineer because of his race—or an impoverished peasant in Haiti? More to the point, would you rather be a Jew in Israel or that Haitian peasant? It's not a tough choice for me.

During my stay in Vienna, I stopped one day at the offices of one of the leading refugee agencies (which must remain anonymous) to interview its director. Outside his office, in a little lobby, sat half a dozen Poles, all hoping to get a few words with him, some of them staring at the maps of Canada and the United States that hung on the wall. Inside the office, the director was explaining to me how he went about his work. The U.S. had not decided at that point—nor has it yet, despite a great deal of pressure from the Austrians—to grant the Poles refugee status as a class, so establishing such status has to be done on a case-by-case basis. Without it, the chance of getting into the U.S., even for Poles with relatives already there, becomes much more difficult and time-consuming. "You know," the director was saying, "we interview these folks, and try to find some little thing in their past that we can hang a refugee tag on. If they ever got in a fight with the police, that's always good; or if they ever spent any time in jail. Anything like that helps a lot." Then, leaning back in his chair and lighting another cigarette, he began talking about his life in the refugee biz. "Before I came to Vienna," he told me, "I worked for a few years in Indochina with those refugees. There is just no comparison between that and this situation here." He stopped for a second, seemingly lost in thought, and then continued: "Here, we do everything we can for people—whether they're Soviet Jews, or Poles, or Rumanians, or what have you. And I'm happy whenever I *do* succeed in helping someone. It's a good feeling. But those people I saw down there when I worked in Thailand..." He stopped again, and shook his head slowly at the memory. "Those people, they were real refugees." □



Brandel's Magic Lantern

by Richard Holmes

The life's work of the historian who rediscovered everyday life.

WHEN King Louis XIV wanted to visit his mistress Madame de Montespan in the great palace at Versailles, he had to pass through the bedchamber of Made-moiselle de Vallière, the previous royal favorite. This was not from lack of sexual propriety on the part of the *roi soleil*. It was because the seventeenth century, even at its most exalted social stratum, simply had not discovered the idea of physical privacy in everyday life. In Europe privacy was an eighteenth-century innovation, even for kings. One apartment just opened into the next; the bedroom was not an inner sanctum. As for the *cabinet de toilette*, it did not properly exist (although a mad Englishman had invented the water closet in 1596).

Similarly, when banquets were served during the winter in the great Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, both

the wine and the water froze in their goblets at the Sun King's table—just as, some two hundred years before, the ink had frozen in the inkwell of the penniless poet François Villon as he sat writing his verse *Petit Testament* in a Paris garret. In the king's case this was not from lack of luxury: massive fireplaces stood at each end of the hall, fed by thousands of hectares of timber. The problem was simply that the notion of luxury, even at the most ostentatious levels of consumption, did not yet include the idea of physical comfort: *le confort* (rare before 1815), being snug, *gemütlich*.

Indeed, the material basis for everyday life before 1800 was so different from our own that even the nature of luxury itself would probably surprise us:

Sugar, for example, was a luxury before the sixteenth century; pepper was still a luxury in the closing years of the seventeenth; so were alcohol and the first "aperitifs" at the time of Cathe-

rine de Medici. . . . Other . . . luxuries were forks (ordinary table forks) and glass window panes, both of which originated in Venice . . . the chair . . . and handkerchiefs were another luxury. Erasmus in his Civility explains: "To wipe the nose on the cap or sleeve belongs to rustics; to wipe the nose on the arm or elbow to pastrycooks . . . but to receive the excreta of the nose with a handkerchief turning slightly away from noble people is an honest thing." Oranges likewise were still a luxury in England in the Stuart period. . . . And we have said nothing yet on the inexhaustible subject of dress.

So writes the French historian Fernand Braudel, who has spent a lifetime researching and classifying such particulars: the "dust of history," as he calls them with a modest Gallic shrug, which belong to the "routine, the unconscious daily round" of a hitherto ignored and largely forgotten past (what the British social historian Peter Laslett has called "the world we have lost").

But these are not the dustpan sweepings of some amateur of local color and the historical picturesque. On the contrary, they form the basis for one of the most profound revolutions in professional historiography to occur in Europe this century; the result of virtually a new conception of history and a new theory of the way we can remember and reconstruct the past. They are also the consequence of an intensely personal voyage of self-discovery of the kind we might normally associate with a poet or novelist.

EVEN A preliminary glance at Braudel's *The Structures of Everyday Life** shows a book that has no obvious compeer either in scope of reference or level of accessibility to the general reader. Pictures, maps, and graphs first leap out: a kitchen scene, a cost-of-living index, a speed map of postal times across the globe. Then the text swirls up, presenting in vivid, ceaseless detail the daily

* Harper & Row, \$30.

Richard Holmes's study of Coleridge was published by Oxford University Press in England in March.

condition of our ancestors' lives in the preindustrial world between 400 and 1800. Their population numbers and their health; their diets and household budgets; their food, drink, clothes, and furniture; their transport, technologies, and inventions; their money and their banking systems; and above all their great cities—Peking, Istanbul, St. Petersburg, Genoa, Paris, London, Mexico City—in growth or decline. We are in the presence of a new kind of historical vision, both more universal and more mundane, which fulfills with a new kind of passion the Johnsonian directive to survey with extensive view "Mankind from China to Peru."

Who is Fernand Braudel, and how did he come to write such a book? Braudel was born in a remote peasant village in the Lorraine before the First World War ("My house was rebuilt in 1806, the year of Jena"). Almost eighty, he is now the grand old man of the *Annales* school of French historians, of whom Hugh Trevor-Roper has written: "No group of scholars has had a greater impact, or more fertilizing effect, on the study of history this century." Between 1949 and 1972 Braudel was professor of modern history at the Collège de France, and a key figure at the influential *Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes* in Paris. In 1981, after the death of Jean-Paul Sartre, the magazine *Lire* questioned a representative cross section of French readers as to which intellectuals now living had exercised the profoundest influence on the history of ideas: Braudel's name came seventh in the poll (after Lévi-Strauss and Simone de Beauvoir)—first among pure historians.

Braudel's eminence was really founded on a single book, which challenged the idea of history as a narrative of the "great events" of the past. This was *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (1949), which is now generally accepted as a classic and frequently compared to Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, though it is a very different kind of book.

The Mediterranean sets out to reinterpret the "events" leading up to

the Battle of Lepanto (1571)—conventionally taken as the moment of decisive triumph of the Spanish over the Turkish empire and one of the great "turning points" of European history—by presenting, in hitherto unattempted detail and at three different time scales, the entire life of the Mediterranean world as it shifted from an Eastern to a Western alignment. (The modern parallels do not need emphasis.) Instead of a zone of sharp political confrontation, Braudel reconstructed the Mediterranean as a single, very slowly developing civilization cradled by its geography, climate, traditional trade patterns, maritime technology, agricultural customs, and varied human settlements of "the mountains, the plains, and the seacoasts." The transitory ambitions of Philip II become a ripple across mighty waters. In a sort of epic pageant, glittering at a thousand human points, Braudel rebuilds an entire world in their place.

The three time scales, which divide *The Mediterranean* into three parts of some 400 pages each, Braudel called "a geographical time, a social time, and an individual time." He later elaborated this theoretical division under three terms: *structures*, *conjonctures*, and *événements*—literally translated, structures, conjunctures, and events. Naturally, this has become the stuff of academic controversy, but we may tread briefly where angels fear to and interpret Braudel's conception as follows.

Structures are the almost unchanging, unperceived conditions of human life: the "deep structures," one might say, of quotidian behavior, shaped by landscape, weather, population, disease, transport, and communications, the available materials of domestic existence and pleasure. *Structures* change only slowly, over centuries: they are so apparently normal, so ever-present, that we do not usually notice them. We take them for granted (like the steadily depleting timber on which this is printed). In the study of history this means that without an exceptional effort, and an exceptional historian, we are liable to lose them forever.

Conjonctures are mid-term phenomena, often social or economic, that change over a decade or generation. They may be the fluctuations of boom and recession, the steady growth of military power or the decline of cities, the expansion of new trades or commodities, the slow-motion explosions of war or cultural revolution. All such things may form these "meeting places," or crossroads of history, where the more or less permanent in human life rubs up against the rapid, dramatic, or ephemeral event.

So we come to *l'histoire événementielle*, as French historians now call it. This is nothing less than the conventional history of politics, diplomacy, and battles—the chanted dates of classroom history, the treatises and assassinations and hallowed speeches, the supposedly great events (which occur in a day or a week) at which the journalists and chroniclers tell us we are witnessing "history in the making." We rarely are, of course, since these events have already been forged at the "lower levels." Thus, of the thousand pages of Braudel's *Mediterranean*, the Battle of Lepanto accounts for only nineteen.

WE ARE NOW, philosophically speaking, on the edge of deep waters. In what sense can we really break up the flow of time into such mechanical "unities" or strata? Can a structure suddenly become, for reasons of technological change, a conjuncture? If no single event is really decisive, are we left with a kind of inhuman, helpless determinism? But let us stick close to Braudel and see how he came to this position as a historian, for his own life provides us with its own kind of philosophical answers.

L'histoire événementielle represented the absolute orthodoxy of the Sorbonne when Braudel was a young student in the 1920s. Much later, with a kind of imagist poetry that is never far from his pen, he expressed his growing doubts of that time in an essay called "The Situation of History in 1950."

Life, the history of the world, and all individual histories present themselves to us as a series of events, in other words of brief and dramatic acts. A battle, an encounter between statesmen, an important speech, a crucial letter, are instants in history. I remember a night near Bahia [Brazil], when I was enveloped in a firework display of phosphorescent fireflies; their pale lights glowed, went out, shone again, all without piercing the night with any true illumination. So it is with events; beyond their glow, darkness prevails. . . . A gleam, but no illumination; facts but no humanity. . . . It is precisely our task to get beyond this first stage of history.

As a young *agrégé*, a certified teacher, of the Sorbonne in 1923, Braudel went to Algeria to teach, first at Constantine and later at Algiers University, where he began slowly to research his book on Philip II and Lepanto. But as he traveled all over North Africa, he began to see the Mediterranean "from the opposite shore, upside down as it were." He has told in his "Personal Testimony" (1972) how this growing sense of the unchanging civilization of Africa and the Levant seemed somehow to push aside the courts and diplomacies of northern and western Europe. His psychic map shifted 180 degrees; his sense of time altered. He was gradually forced to reconsider the entire nature of the historical change between Turkish and Spanish supremacy. It became a question of a whole civilization shifting slowly on the axis of everyday life in its most fundamental manifestations. But how to research this? And far more, how to describe it? His ideas were still vague.

In 1927 he was helped along by a remarkable technical discovery. He had fallen upon the archives at Simancas, in Spain, a fantastic hoard of regional documentation for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, well known to historians but previously unexploited to any degree because of the intimidating weight of its vast, chaotic files of material. Braudel now had an unusual piece of luck.

When I tried to buy an ordinary camera (microfilm is a post-war invention), an American cameraman offered me an ancient apparatus intended for making movies, and proved to me that it could perform marvels in photographing documents. I aroused envy and admiration . . . by taking 2 to 3 thousand photos a day and rolling thirty meters of film. I used it and abused it, in Spain and in Italy. Thanks to this ingenious cameraman, I was no doubt the first user of true microfilms, which I developed myself, and later read, through long days and nights, with a simple magic lantern.

ARMED WITH this instrument of the New World, Braudel was now able to immerse himself in the Old as no historian had done before. He plunged into a myriad of sixteenth-century particulars: business letters, bills of lading, births and deaths, corn prices, shipping tonnage, insurance rates, cannon power, olive harvests, medical recipes, pirates' tales. Between 1927 and 1933 he "lived in the archives without hurrying"; he also flew, in the sea-skipping hydroplanes of the day, over his beloved coastlines and archipelagos. The Mediterranean came alive for him in a new way. And perhaps just here was born his characteristic image of the historian not as peering back into the past but as peering down into the depth: "One must keep looking down into the well, into the deepest water, down into material life."

In 1935 Braudel went to teach for three years in Brazil and read "kilometers" more of his microfilms. Now he had seen the fireflies; yet, in a situation well known to modern Ph.D. students, the more data he amassed, the more remote became the actual execution of his book. The Book. Among his friends, he says, it took on the reputation of a chimera. He was approaching forty.

Braudel had made contact with two other French historians, Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch, who in 1929 had founded the journal *Annales* to attack the *histoire événementielle*

of the Sorbonnists. The proposed a "total history," which would combine geography, demography, sociology, and psychology in a radically new kind of history writing. Its watchwords were "globality" and "synthesis," though its style degenerated—as the journal's title suggested—on a meticulous study of statistics, local documentation, "annals." All this was encouraging for Braudel and confirmed him on his chosen path; but *The Mediterranean* remained to be written.

Then came the war. Braudel served on the Rhine frontier in 1940, was captured and eventually sent to a special "bad boys" prison camp at Lübeck in northeast Prussia. (All the quality were there: French Jewish officers, Poles from Warsaw, R.A.F. pilots . . . a persistent rumor says Braudel released relays of tricolor-painted pigeons over the barbed wire.) Back in France, Marc Bloch joined the Resistance and was shot shortly after completing a moving testament, *The Historian's Craft*, in answer to his little son's question: "What's the use of history, Papa?" Lucien Febvre, already in his sixties, alone remained free. *Annales* was suspended.

And now, at last, in the darkest hour, Fernand Braudel began to write. At his prisoner's trestle table, in the cold north, far from the sunlit sea. He had no notes, no reference books, no microfilm, no magic lantern—only his prodigious memory. But his vision of the Mediterranean took shape, and the book began to flow, "like a meditation," scribbled into a series of school exercise books, which he dispatched clandestinely, one by one, to Lucien Febvre. His imprisonment and the whole experience of war had crystallized his conception of history "as a direct existential response to the tragic times I was passing through." He later wrote in his "Personal Testimony":

All those occurrences which poured in upon us from the radio and the newspapers of our enemies, or even the news from London which our clandestine receivers gave us—I had to outdistance, reject, deny them. Down

with events and occurrences, especially the vexing ones! I had to believe that history, destiny, was written at a much more profound level. . . . Far removed from our persons and our daily misery, history was being made, shifting slowly, as slowly as the ancient life of the Mediterranean, whose perdurability and majestic immobility had so often moved me. So it was that I consciously set forth in search of an historical language—the most profound I could grasp or invent—in order to present unchanging (or at least very slowly changing) conditions which stubbornly assert themselves over and over again. My book was organized on several different temporal scales, moving from the unchanging to the fleeting occurrence. For me, even today, these are the lines that delimit and give form to every historical landscape.

Thus *The Mediterranean* came to be published in 1949. It was revised and augmented in 1966, and translated and put round the world in paperback in 1973. It became the flagship of the *Annales* school, which soon took the Sorbonne establishment by storm. Braudel moved into his professorship at the Collège de France. Younger *Annalists* joined the cause—Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Jacques Le Goff, Pierre Chauvin. But Lucien Febvre was still anxious to consolidate and explain the *Annalists'* position to a wider public, and in 1952 he asked Braudel to write a general history of preindustrial Europe for a popular series, *Destins du Monde*. Braudel embarked upon his second magnum opus, *Capitalism and Material Life: 1400–1800*, which, like its predecessor, took more than twenty-five years to reach its definitive form, in 1979.

SO OUR STORY comes round. Although remaining an illustrated work, the book developed far beyond its European frontier. It emerged as another three-part study, with a triple time scale or frame of reference. *The Structures of Everyday Life*, with

the full Braudelian weight of meaning on the initial part of the title, is the first of these, concerned with the lowest, least-changing, daily level of life, and for that reason the least technical and most immediately attractive. (The remaining two volumes have yet to be published in translation. They are *Les Jeux de L'Echange*, "The Wheels of Commerce," dealing with life at the level of the market economy; and *Le Temps du Monde*, "The Perspective of the World," dealing with the pre-capitalist superstructure and international trade.)

Everyday Life is truly "global," flitting between East and West, North and South, Paris and Peking. Like all ambitious books, it has been attacked by specialists for factual errors and occasionally extravagant generalizations. Nevertheless, its broad authority remains deeply impressive.

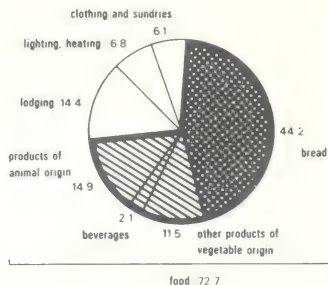
Braudel's characteristic method is to start with a rapid accumulation of economic statistics and comparisons and then move on to more leisurely speculations about the variety of human response to conditions across the entire face of the earth. He asks, for instance, what sort of social structure is implied by soci-

ocratic totalitarian systems and all the leisure of the peasants [the maize crop required them to work only fifty days in the year] was used for gigantic public works of the Egyptian type." Without maize, he concludes, "the giant Mayan or Aztec pyramids, the cyclopean walls of Cuzco or the wonders of Macchu Pichu would have been impossible." By contrast, wheat-based societies of the European type produced a complex, decentralized village life and volatile market economy, where bread prices and political upheaval were intimately linked. The rice fields of China brought "high populations and strict social discipline," where stable but rigid authority expressed itself in large-scale irrigation works like the Imperial Canal of the Blue River at Peking. It is striking how slowly these fundamental patterns have altered.

Braudel ponders at length the connection between population density and social development. A density of about thirty people to the square kilometer seems to be necessary before a "culture" becomes a "civilization" with a vital and creative "demographic tension." In 1600, Italy had forty-four people to the square kilometer, France thirty-four,

BUDGET OF A MASON'S FAMILY

(5 persons) in Berlin around 1800
as a percentage of revenue



BUDGET OF A
MASON'S FAMILY IN
BERLIN ABOUT 1800

Compare it with the calculations of the average expenditure on food of the Parisian in 1788 and 1854 (p. 133). Bread here represents considerably more than half the family's food budget, an enormous proportion in view of the relative price of cereals. So this is a precise example of what a monotonous and difficult diet was like.

eties based on wheat (Europe), rice (China), or maize (South America). The maize-growing societies, for example, "on the irrigated terraces of the Andes or on the lakesides of the Mexican plateaux, resulted in the

Germany twenty-eight, China twenty, Poland fourteen, Norway one and a half. This makes an interesting index of relative social sophistication in the twilight of the Renaissance. He also raises the question, without

answering it, of whether a second threshold of civilization is passed when these density figures are multiplied by factors of ten or more, as in the cities of today.

Yet all these sweeps of classification and statistic (often highlighted by *Annales*-style flowcharts, graphs, and animated maps) are wonderfully balanced by Braudel's appetite for the texture of daily life, the microdust of humanity, the sparkle and the strangeness. He celebrates them with gusto and wit, and with a grand respect for the odd and—to us—abnormal. (Philippe Ariès has observed that it is precisely in the *otherness* of the distant past, the quality of the unexpected, that we best appreciate what our own "norms" and social assumptions are, and what an "alternative" style of life might really be.)

The fashions for beards, wigs, or even perfumes have always fluctuated generation by generation according to some mysterious standard of masculinity. A new fashion for the long beard and short haircut was supposedly launched by Pope Julius II at the turn of the sixteenth century, but by the time of Louis XIV the beard was out again and the powdered wig back. (The short beard and long hair only return with the Romantics.) In 1559 scolding royal letters had been necessary "to impose a bearded bishop or archbishop on recalcitrant chapters" who regarded the hairy chin as suspiciously avant-garde.

Noblemen in France were still banqueting in the communal kitchen until the sixteenth century, and in Austria young military officers were still being instructed not to spit in their plates at the archduke's table in 1624. Table manners in Europe had no real existence before 1600, until the introduction of the individual fork, spoon, and plate. Previously meat was eaten with fingers and knives off a wooden slab or a "trencher of stale bread," which was distributed to the poor after the meal. By contrast, the Chinese, with their individual chopsticks (in special cases) and glazed bowls, were models of fastidiousness.

Orientalists squatted at informal oc-

casions; Westerners sat. The chair in China was an expression of formal hierarchies: "the sovereign's throne, the mandarin's seat, benches and chairs in schools." The Arthurian Round Table, on the other hand, was an early model of the Western democratic process. In the West, it was only in the "cultural revolution" of the 1960s that everyone suddenly started sitting, Buddha-like, on the floor.

Much of Braudel's most speculative questioning reflects directly on our own time, though the implications are sometimes ominous and the answers by no means clear. In what kind of society does alcohol cross the line between luxury and necessity (he notes that in Poland grain statistics include grain alcohol)? Why does syphilis seem to be associated with colonial invasions? Why did the great imperial power of Venice spend more than its annual receipts on military stockpiling, when there was no war but its influence was declining? Why did bankers treat credit as if it were a form of alchemy? Why do energy-creating inventions like the steam engine (or solar power) take so long to be usefully applied? Why does patriotism begin—and possibly end—with the walled city? The reader is left to brood on such questions, which flash up through history like so many "distant mirrors," in Barbara Tuchman's phrase.

THESE ARE just a sampling of the riches contained in *Everyday Life*, the result of Braudel's gaze down into the deep. It is a cornucopia of factual observation and inquiry. Yet the book does have certain limits. As these point to the possible future of the *Annales* school, and the development of European historiography as a whole, our story is not quite complete without them.

The American historian J. H. Hexter has observed that there is something Rabelaisian about Braudel. Not in his humor, but in his sheer appetite for material substance, for piling fact on fact, statistic on statistic, inventory on catalogue. It

is *fat* history, greedy history, and for that reason possibly complacent history. There can be no question about Braudel's intellectual and moral daring, but there may be a certain lack of ideological courage. (One can trace here the shadow, I suspect, of a much broader debate between the American and the European viewpoint in the contemporary world.)

Braudel's history simply doesn't ask certain kinds of question, or pose certain types of problem. One theme of *Everyday Life* is the contrast between poverty and riches at every point on the globe: the rich are different everywhere, and at every time. But Braudel is curiously ambivalent about these inequalities: are they the source of liberal pressure for progress? Or are they the stuff of Marxist class conflict? Or are they merely part of history's gorgeous tapestry? Braudel doesn't commit himself: "It was the inequalities, the injustices, the contradictions large or small, that made the world go round and endlessly transformed its upper structures." That surely tells us little, except in the words of the song, "*que sera, sera.*"

Maybe this kind of ideological commitment is not required of a historian; maybe he is much better without it. Yet in a reflective monograph entitled *Afterthoughts* (1976) Braudel goes some way toward acknowledging the issue himself by saying that he had never sufficiently faced up to the problem of "hierarchies." He continues: "For this is indubitably the key problem, the problem of problems. Must the hierarchy, the dependence of one man upon another, be destroyed? 'Yes,' said Jean-Paul Sartre in 1968. But is such a thing really possible?" And there he leaves it.

Another interesting difficulty lies in Braudel's conception of the *material* everyday. The *Annales* group—Bloch, Febvre—were originally dedicated to "total history"; yet in Braudel's hands this has shifted to "global socioeconomic history," which is not quite the same thing. Febvre had intended to write a companion volume, in the *Destins du Monde* series, on "Western Thought and Belief," but he died before it

could be completed. Perhaps Braudel never came to terms with the missing dimension.

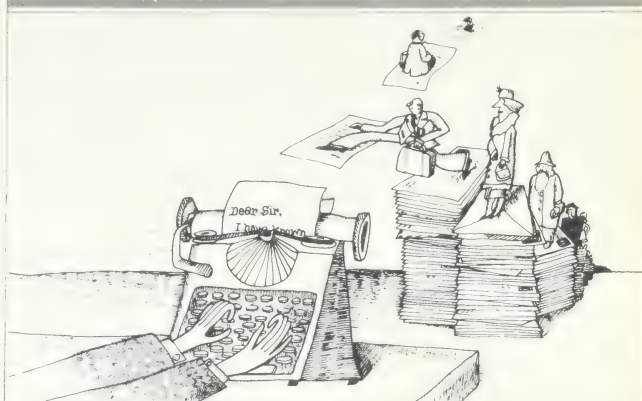
In searching for the permanent qualities of everyday life, Braudel has come to rest, through the very brilliance and solidity of his sources, not only on a material bedrock but also a *materialistic* one. At the most fundamental level, he seems to imply, men and women are the sum of the physical forces and objects and technologies around them: the weather, the water, the birth rate, the harvest, the clothes, the furniture, the cookery, the horsepower, the cash boxes, the street sewers, the city insurance rates.

But is this really true? What about religious hopes and guilts, family affections, political ideals, popular education, or merely dreams of travel and adventure? Surely these are just as fundamental, just as ingrained in the very flesh of the daily round, and just as permanent and slow to change. If we have the history of domestic privacy, shouldn't we also have the history of reading, or prayer, or marriage? In short, if we have Gutenberg in the index (we do), shouldn't we also have the Reformation (we do not)?

In fact, it is precisely in these areas that the French historians who come after Braudel, both inside and outside the *Annales* group, have done much of their best work. Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, for example, has recreated the entire sensibility of a medieval village in *Montaignou* (1978), with chapters on body language, sex, marriage and love, magic, religion, and morality. Philippe Ariès has produced two marvelously fresh investigations of the slowly changing European attitudes toward childhood (1962) and death (1974 and 1981). This is the new history of "mentalities."

Of course, both these historians really depend on Braudel's conception of the "deep structures" of historical time. He has been the beacon for a hundred books, and his very limitations have marked the departure points for younger historians. *L'histoire événementielle* will never be the same again. We remember differently now. □

ARTS AND LETTERS



Writes of Passage

by Jeffrey Burke

The letter of recommendation as a social force and literary genre.

Do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you or from you? You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on your hearts to be known and read by all men.

—2 Corinthians 3:1-2

THUS SPAKE Paul to the Corinthians, but the most epistolary apostle seemed to think otherwise of the Romans, to whom he offered the following testimonials:

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchræe, that you may receive her in the Lord as befits the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a helper of many and of myself as well. Greet Priscilla and Aquila... who risked their necks for my life.... Greet my beloved Epænetus, who was the first convert in Achaea for Christ.

—Romans 16:1-5

Paul goes on to recommend some twenty-five other worthy individuals in this passage, yet after "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners" (verse 7), his descriptive powers peter out. The next ten or so he labels by their various associations with Christ or the Lord ("beloved in the Lord," "approved in Christ," et cetera), and the remainder he just lists: "Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them...."

That stylistic deterioration reflects one of the fundamental laws facing those who write letters of recommendation: *The more individuals one has to recommend, the less one finds to say about each.* After all, not everyone has risked her neck for you. Phlegon's credentials may shine as brightly as Phoebe's, but Paul is a busy man and there are lions to be fed.

Jeffrey Burke, a former editor of Harper's, is a writer who lives in New York.

Millions of letters of recommendation are written in this country every year as a seemingly essential part of a citizen's advancement through the levels of education and from job to usually white-collar job. To judge only by quantity, these letters make up a thriving literary genre, or more accurately, a subliterary one, for each has few readers, only file clerks collect them, and publishers ignore them.

At the typical high school in the fall, a swarm of anxious seniors descends on a handful of hapless teachers, each student clutching as many as five college applications, each college requesting as many as three letters of recommendation. On the receiving end of the high school swarm-and-handful is the college admissions officer. Through the fall and winter months his office becomes increasingly Auegan as each aspirant's package arrives with examination scores, high school grades, preprinted application forms that often include (shudder) the applicant's autobiography, and all those letters of recommendation.

Here's a microcosm of the numbers involved. The College of the University of Chicago, which has a student body of 2,800, received 4,200 applications for admission into its 1981 freshman class. The college asks each applicant for two letters of recommendation, although it waives the requirement if a student comes in for an interview. Making some allowance for interviews, there remains the Herculean task of reading as many as, say, 5,000 letters of recommendation, and Theodore O'Neill, the associate director of admissions, says every letter is read. Eight full-time and three part-time screeners, along with some faculty volunteers, lend a hand. In the two months allotted to complete the process in 1981, the admissions office managed to find 1,900 acceptable applicants, of whom only 750 eventually matriculated. Though many are written about, few are chosen.

For some practical purposes, namely fulfilling application requirements and conveying an influential name from one desk to another, the

letter of recommendation endures. But as a document intended to supplement and surpass the various objective tests of a person's fitness by taking his or her true measure and plumbing the unquantifiables, it is dead. In the discussion that follows, the genre is revealed in all its superfluosity and absurdity, and in one notable example it is characterized by ethics so blighted as to ruin any hope of its regeneration.

Last summer three unwise men wrote letters of recommendation for a colleague of theirs to assist him in getting a job. Each letter praised the quality of the man's work, noted his dedication, emphasized his integrity. And each neglected to mention that he recently had been convicted of rape. He got the job.

CONSIDERING the traditional relationship between quantity and quality, it's no surprise that even the best intentions crumble before the high school onslaught that marks the genre's first significant appearance in society. If St. Paul were a pedagogue today, 75 percent of those anxious seniors seeking letters might be consigned to brethernhood. But teachers want to be conscientious; and for many of them it wasn't so long ago that they were the ones clutching applications. So, regarding the situation as one of the academic life's unavoidable—like yesterday's term papers and tomorrow's monographs—they take shovel in hand, and pretend that most of their students are memorable, some outstanding. The resulting style is a form of verbal bloat noted by a British observer, John Sparrow, in his recent book, *Words on the Air: Essays on Language, Manners, Morals, and Law*. Mr. Sparrow cites two letters of recommendation from American academics, one by a professor of political science, who said "that a candidate was 'capable of forming insightful associations between the elements of his knowledge'"; and one by a professor of economics, who said the same candidate "was 'sophisticated in interpersonal relationships.'" From this

we can extrapolate a law: *The less one seems able to say, the more ways one finds of saying it.*

Mr. O'Neill, of the College of the University of Chicago, puts letters of recommendation in third or fourth place among factors weighing on acceptance. Out of necessity, then, admissions officers have come to accept that *The more letters one has to read, the less each comes to mean*. These two doctrines always operate in tandem, and Lawrence Handel illustrates the interplay in his somewhat radical guide for high school students, *College Confidential*:

For instance, if a teacher wrote that "Sally is a good student" and that "Sidney is a marvelous, terrific, fantastic, stupendous student," admissions officers would translate as follows: "Sally is lousy"; "Sidney is good."

As revealed in letters of recommendation, an academic rate of exchange governs the linguistic currency by which individuals are traded from one level of education to the next. In high school Sidney seems worth the shelling out of four shiny bits of flattery; by the prevailing rate of exchange, that's equivalent to one plain admissions adjective. Since neither level recognizes the other's interests, the processes of praise inflation and devaluation have become mutually perpetuating. As for the colleges that don't require letters of recommendation, they have developed their own guidelines:

When an admissions officer receives a sheaf of recommendations that he has not asked for, he begins to wonder if there is something wrong with the application. . . . As one admissions officer puts it, "The thicker the file, the thicker the student."

—FRANK H. BOWLES,
How to Get Into College

So we find that letters of recommendation are governed by two laws, each of which is fundamentally self-contradictory. One states that more means less, the other that less means more. This defies the rules of logic and by itself proves the genre meaningless.

The entire practice, then, is unjust for those rated and bewildering for those who give and make use of the ratings. It also robs recommendations of whatever benefits they are intended to bring. No one can know what is meant by a particular rating. Such a practice is fraught with difficulties; the costs to deceivers and deceived alike are great.

—Sissela Bok, *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*

GRADUATE and professional schools require a more sophisticated approach to the composition and assessment of letters of recommendation. The numbers involved are much smaller, so the swarm mentality has been left behind. Specialization takes over, Cyclopean department heads replace the Argus-eyed admissions officer, and a kind of academic old-boy network insulates each field, from anthropology to zoology. How much a college senior knows will make him some of the distance, but it's who he knows that carries the day.

An old saw, perhaps, but Charles Walters makes book on it in a paperback entitled *How to Apply to Graduate School Without Really Lying*. The pseudonymous author describes himself as "a working academician (a psychologist as it happens) and I've been on the faculty of a university for over a dozen years." Among ten publisher's blurbs on the book's back cover is: "the only book that tells you . . . how to get strong letters of recommendation." The chapter on filling out applications is subtitled: "The carefully constructed truth is a two-edged sword only if someone checks it out." The chapter on letters of recommendation, one of five and thirty-three pages long, is entitled "Taming the Wild Reference." It opens:

Generally speaking, letters of reference have no known validity as predictors of graduate school performance, success in the field, or anything else. They are not worthless in principle, I suppose. (Emphasis in original.)

• **Offering a Recommendation.** You will not ordinarily agree to recommend someone whose ability or personal qualities you cannot honestly praise. But if you give more praise than is merited, you are doing a disservice to the business community and to your reader, who depends on your integrity as a responsible businessman. The letters given here will suit most recommendation situations; you can easily remove sentences you don't need.

General rules.

Inject an enthusiastic tone into your letter.

Make the letter a personal one.

Give as many facts as you think necessary.

Alternate phrases.

- (a) Please accept my recommendation of John Roberts without any hesitation whatsoever.

I am pleased to send to you the information you asked for concerning the record of Marsha Smith.

Robert Brown has been an associate of mine for five years, and it is with great pleasure that I recommend him for the position in your organization.

- (b) I have known John for six years, and can unequivocally attest to his enthusiasm, integrity and ability. I am certain that when you meet him you will be impressed by his great personal charm.

Marsha was employed as secretary from 1960 until 1965. We were always completely satisfied with the manner in which she fulfilled her responsibilities and performed her duties. She approached her work with a conscientiousness and enthusiasm admired by all who worked with her.

Robert has been active in community affairs for many years, having served as district attorney. He is now devoting much of his time and effort in the fight against juvenile delinquency. All who know him have the highest regard for him.

- (c) I heartily recommend him to you and know he will be a valued addition to your staff.

He had the respect and admiration of everyone who came in contact with him. It is a distinct pleasure to recommend him to you.

There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that he will be a valuable asset to your organization.

Fig. 1. Varying degrees of enthusiasm, from the Director's and Officer's Complete Letter Book. Copyright © 1965 by Prentice-Hall.

What worth a letter has in practice, according to Mr. Walters, depends a lot on the value assigned to each letter's writer by each letter's reader. Accordingly, the book advises the student on how to "stalk" the four species of "game" most likely to influence a particular department head, listing them in descending order of value: "personal acquaintances [of the recipient]," "big names," "comer names," and "local big frogs." Bagging such game may earn the student splashing rights in the graduate pond.

Having observed a few graduate

departments in my day, there is no point on which I can dispute the validity of Mr. Walters's analysis and methods. But good as it is, the strategy of big-name hunting can go awry. A friend of mine who passed through the anthropology department of Columbia University in New York said Margaret Mead would write letters of recommendation for anyone. By circulating so much prestigious currency, it's conceivable that the renowned anthropologist reduced the value of her testimonials among many recipients to just another-Margaret-Mead-letter.

More importantly, while concentrating on the John Hancock below "Respectfully yours," Mr. Walters devalues the letter above it, by showing it to be the product of flattery and finagling. The student gunning for a big name should avoid the mistake of thinking that "a letter describes reality rather than that view of reality the writer has had the opportunity to see." A student who chooses to follow the Walters method of influencing "that view of reality" will feign earnestness, enthusiasm, and familiarity with the letter writer's scholarly work, so that the writer "with some management will write as if he actually knows you." A strong point in the student's favor, says Mr. Walters, is that "any letter writer (including *big names*) does not have particularly high standards for saying some fairly positive things about you." It's difficult to see who in this whole process has particularly high standards.

Steven S. Rosenfeld eliminated the middleman and took those Machiavellian strategies to what might be their logical conclusion. A straight-A pre-med student, he was forced to leave Harvard College when it was discovered that he had forged letters of recommendation for medical school, a scholarship, and membership in Phi Beta Kappa.

In a story that ran on December 17, 1974, *The New York Times* quoted from Mr. Rosenfeld's written explanation of his behavior:

He attributed his actions to "almost constant pressure on a controversial project, spending excessive time in the laboratory, and a demanding course load" that, he said, "caused me to completely lose my perspective and to see events in desperate terms."

Desperate terms require desperate measures. Imagine a young man slumped bleary-eyed one late night before his typewriter, his fingers poised over the keys to a guaranteed medical future. Chances are that if the forgeries hadn't been discovered, Mr. Rosenfeld would have entered medical school and distinguished himself. His lab work reportedly was brilliant, though sub-

sequently invalidated in light of the letters.

Graduate work done by students who subscribe to the Walters method is certainly far less vulnerable than Mr. Rosenfeld's proved to be, but only a narrow gap separates the two kinds of letters and their relative validity. Mr. Walters advocates bending the truth a bit; Mr. Rosenfeld bent the truth till it broke him.

THE ROSENFELD forgeries might have remained undiscovered had it not been for the stir in late 1974 caused by the Buckley Amendment, named after its sponsor, Sen. James L. Buckley (Rep.-N.Y.). Formally known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the amendment was part of the Elementary and Secondary School Act signed by President Ford on August 20, 1974.

The amendment's initial intention was to open all school records to the parents of students and to students over eighteen, thereby preventing incorrect data and impressions from being perpetuated. There followed an immediate outcry from academic institutions, to the effect that numerous existing documents, including letters of recommendation, would lose the shield of confidentiality behind which they had been written. While academia marshaled its protest, some universities began removing confidential material from their files, and it was in such a protective housecleaning at Harvard that Mr. Rosenfeld came to grief.

The amendment was swiftly amended to soothe the aggrieved parties; existing letters of recommendation retained their confidentiality. But a nettlesome provision came into being: although students still had the right to see letters of recommendation written after the bill took effect, they could waive that right on a case-by-case basis. Granted, the prevailing wisdom since 1974 has been that if you want to get a decent letter, you should sign the waiver. Otherwise the teacher or professor might feel compelled to write something as safely inoffensive

to the student as it is unimpressive to the admissions officer.

Nonetheless, the waiver phenomenon increased the vulnerability academics were beginning to feel whenever they wrote other letters of recommendation, namely for colleagues. An academic rarely makes a move—to publish, to get a grant to change jobs, to advance within a faculty—without one or more colleagues being called in to express opinions on his merits. All the opening makes for a lot of recommendations, and in the good old days one wrote at will, confidently because confidentially. Those days were gone by the 1970s. Watergate, the Freedom of Information Act (1974), and the Buckley Amendment gave privacy a bad name; confidentiality came to mean only that one had something to hide; and the country waxed litigious.

Suddenly the danger of being sued for writing something negative in a letter of recommendation for another teacher or professional was not so remote. In fact, a successful libel action was brought by a Wisconsin schoolteacher against a district superintendent of schools who had written on a standard reference form that he "would not hire or rehire" her and that he thought she would not be a successful teacher because she had "trouble holding position." The decision in *Burish v. Rice*, which awarded the school teacher substantial money damages, was filed in Manitowoc County Circuit Court on September 16, 1974, that fateful year.

The case is described and analyzed in "Negative Statements in Letters of Recommendation: From Defamation to Defense," by Delbert K. Clear, published in the December 1978 *Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals*. A frequently cited case in this sort of litigation is *Nelson v. Whitten*, 1921, in which the "master of a vessel," answering a request by a former employee for a letter of recommendation, wrote to the employer, in part:

As to your qualifications as a captain I can say you were an excellent housekeeper—Your

knowledge of navigation is exceedingly meager.

I am so much in doubt as to your loyalty and integrity that I could not conscientiously give a recommendation to anyone desiring to employ you.

The master made the letter's contents known to a third party; the former employee sued and won. The court ruled: "Because of a request for such statement, plaintiff did not invite defendant to make public anything false and defamatory."

LEGAL concerns and the drift away from confidentiality have had some effect on letters of recommendation in the business profession, but a more curious development is the marked effect the business sensibility has had on the genre.

Last November the *Wall Street Journal* printed an item in its "Labor Letter" column that alluded to tenuousness and read in part:

Increasingly, bosses are skittish about giving candid, written references for fear ex-employees may sue. This hurts letters' value

and prompts many employers to stop requiring them.

Then there is the truly demoralizing behavior of Abigail VanBuren, whose syndicated advice column, "Dear Abby," regularly endeavors to make this world a nicer place for people whose worst problem may be their inability to find a better source of wisdom. A secretary wrote that she was leaving her job and had asked her boss for a letter of recommendation. We pick up with the boss's reply:

He said, "Go ahead and write a letter of recommendation and I will sign it."

Abby, I would feel foolish writing a letter of recommendation for myself, but since he asked me to do it, I suppose I must. My problem: Should I write myself a glowing recommendation? (My boss has told me many times that I am an excellent secretary and he is pleased with my work.) Or should I be modest and restrained?

Abby's reply? "Go ahead and write yourself a glowing recommendation."

Parker Publishing Company, a di-

vision of Prentice-Hall, Inc., has a series of books that include *Complete Book of Model Business Letters*, *The Prentice-Hall Complete Secretarial Letter Book*, and *Director's and Officer's Complete Letter Book*. Each manual provides form letters of recommendation offering what one book calls "varying degrees of enthusiasm and endorsement" (see fig. 1), and claims, in the words of another, that "the letters given here will suit most recommendation situations; you can easily remove sentences you don't need."

With its affection for language like "recommendation situation" and its penchant for reducing as much work as possible to a form, the business world couldn't comfortably abide the precise, subjective, personalized style of a genuine letter of recommendation. Many of the how-to books for job-seekers advise a Charles Walters approach but one geared to coaching the recommender for the likeliest medium, the telephone. The phrase "References furnished on request" that concludes résumés most often promises not a sheaf of letters but a list of names and phone numbers.

In fact, the business letter of rec-

assified continued from page 79

RESORTS

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Solution to the April Puzzle Notes for "Crazy Quilt"

C	O	L	U	T	D	A	I	E	L	N	G
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C	A	S	C	L	E	P	A	I	R	O	
A	R	I	S	T	L	A	I	T	O	P	
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R	E	M	R	N	A	O	P	E	I	R	
S	T	E	E	D	S	T	O	S	D	A	

Across: 1. counterpanes, homonym; 9. liquidate, anagram; 10. du(pin); 12. Altair, anagram; 14. past-IC-CIO; 16. bilgewa(t)er, anagram; 17. F-rump; 18. L-in-D-y; 19. g(ask)et; 21. flat-top; 22. att.-end; 25. ar(t)is(t)es; 28. cre(w)-O-le; 29. encyclopedia, anagram; 30. pop art, trap-op., reversed; 31. remedy, hidden; 32. stern-a; 33. nosier, anagram of "Ron(n)ie's". **Down:** 1. clap-board; 2. oils-licks; 3. untangle, anagram; 4. Dec.-Id-E; 5. ad-ri(t); 6. epalette, anagram; 7. ignore, anagram; 8. G-(as)man; 11. le(P...i)-op(T)era; 13. tailgaters, anagram; 15. c/rafts, craft/s; 20. signal, two meanings*; 23. tarpon, anagram; 24. to-ro-id (reversal); 26. T-apes; 27. ey(r)e; 28. C(a)l(g)a(r)y.

* The setters apologize for their cluing the wrong word—"signal" instead of "signet." Any confusion in the lower left corner of diagrams entered in the contest will be ignored.

ommendation's predictable lack of substance or distinctiveness made it a perfect candidate for inclusion in *Mad Libs* (edition No. 10). Nothing speaks more eloquently for the genre's condition than the idea of a roomful of partygoers filling in the blanks with names, nouns, and adjectives, elevating a commonplace to transcendent hilarity.

While the genre has slipped into obsolescence and absurdity among business users, other professionals have kept a weather eye on the legal climate. The fear of being sued does not lend itself to candor in a character reference—an understatement given dramatic illustration by the three unwise men. In a genre meaningless in quantity, frivolous or disingenuous by various turns, their case of intentional omission reveals the letter of recommendation as a nasty vehicle no one's faith should ride on.

LAST JUNE, Dr. Arif Hussain, an anesthesiologist who trained and worked at Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital, was convicted, along with two other physicians, of raping a twenty-eight-year-old nurse the year before. These three men may be called many things, but they are not the unwise men in question. Nor is Dr. Martin Downey, Jr., chief of anesthesiology at Children's Hospital in Buffalo, New York, who hired Dr. Hussain two months after his conviction.

Dr. Downey welcomed Dr. Hussain largely on the basis of letters of recommendation written by three doctors at Brigham and Women's. According to *The New York Times*, one letter was dated July 1; Dr. Hussain was sentenced on June 30. According to *Newsweek*, the letters for Dr. Hussain were written "just after his conviction." In the eyes of the law, at least, Dr. Hussain was guilty of rape before his colleagues essayed their testimonials. And what testimonials.

Patricia Krumholtz, public relations coordinator of Children's Hospital, said she couldn't give me copies of the letters, but over the

phone she read me quotes that she said made up "the bulk of" the letters.

Here is Dr. Arif Hussain, convicted rapist, as portrayed by his colleagues:

I worked with him for the past two and a half years as a member of the Department of Anesthesiology at the Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. He was outstanding in both medical knowledge and technical abilities in a group of outstanding anesthesiology residents. He gets along well with professional peers, he manages the most complicated anesthesia cases with skill and calm authority.

—Dr. Aaron Gissen, professor in the department of anesthesia at Brigham and Women's Hospital.

He is a relentless worker who constantly delivers quality medical care to his patients. His approach to the surgical patient shows his compassion for their upcoming experience. He gained due respect from the surgical staff with whom he had good communication. . . . I have no hesitation on recommending him for any position in anesthesiology. He would be an asset to any hospital.

—Dr. John Wark, at the time an instructor in anesthesia at Harvard Medical School and an associate in anesthesiology at Brigham and Women's.

I can say without hesitation that during the period of time that I knew Dr. Hussain he was clearly one of the most knowledgeable and skilled residents in anesthesia that I had ever seen. In addition, he was an extremely cooperative and unusually diligent physician. He was well liked by his fellow anesthesiologists, surgical colleagues and nursing staff in the operating room area. More importantly, he was a very concerned physician who took a great deal of effort to know his patients and treat them with kind and considerate clinical competence. Dr. Hussain spent many a long evening at the hospital caring for critically ill patients. In many cases he stayed long beyond his required time be-

cause of his concern for a particular patient. In summary, I believe Dr. Hussain is an extremely diligent and competent anesthesiologist and would recommend him without hesitation.

—Dr. Benjamin Covino, chairman of the department of anesthesia at Brigham and Women's, professor of anesthesia at Harvard Medical School.

The postscript is from *Newsweek*, October 5, 1981, on Dr. Hussain's being "charged with sexually assaulting two women patients in Waltham, Mass." (the charge and subsequent arrest that revealed all to Children's Hospital in Buffalo):

The new charges against Hussain have been brought by two former patients at Waltham Hospital, where Hussain spent his first year of residency. One woman claims the doctor raped her while she was confined to the hospital; the other, who was being treated for spinal meningitis, says Hussain attacked her in an attempted rape.

The letters quoted above represent the apotheosis of the genre, in their clarity—making allowances for grammar—and obvious intention to describe and praise in specific terms. What's more, they worked; the man got the job. With no mention of the rape conviction, however, they also represent the very lowest level to which the genre has sunk. They are evasive, incomplete, misrepresentative, and meaningless.

In one of its Hussain stories, the *Times* quotes an unidentified surgeon at Massachusetts General Hospital as saying, "Letters of recommendation today are worthless." He goes on to say, "I have been given advice by our hospital lawyer: if you want to make a derogatory remark to do it by phone, and to do it from a pay phone." Doctors' fears echo those of the academics. All the professors with whom I have talked say that the letter that once would have contained negative remarks is today written as a come-on, so deliberately noncommittal as to invite the reader to pick up the phone if he wants a real earful. No record, no

reckoning. Delbert K. Clear refers to his strategy in his article on defamation and *Burish v. Rice* and concludes that "anyone who has read recently compiled files appreciates the massive amounts of non-information in them." But he adds that professionals need not resign themselves to silence or pap when asked to describe a Hussain. In four closely written pages, Mr. Clear offers strategies for preserving the standard defenses against adverse judgments in libel and slander actions. He also neatly organizes the process in a diagram.

Mr. Clear's optimism notwithstanding, I suspect that few professionals would take the time and trouble to fulfill the legal requirements of self-protection that he suggests. Not when the professional knows he can skate through the letter and then just pop down to the local drugstore to do a proper and safe job on the phone. Clearly, the legal avenue is paved with good intentions, but it won't lead to a revival of the letter of recommendation.

Following the scandal of the Hussain letters, Daniel C. Tosteson, dean of Harvard Medical School, appointed a fourteen-member committee to study the problem. (An ironic note: in 1978, when her book on lying was published, Sissela Bok was teaching "ethics and decision-making in Medicine" at Harvard Medical School according to the author's note on the dust jacket. She was not a member of the ad hoc committee.) In its "Report of the Harvard Medical School ad hoc Committee on Letters of Reference," dated January 11, 1982, the panel notes that "in recent years letters of reference have tended to be less precise and to contain less information which might be interpreted as negative. This stems from a number of causes including a fear of reprisals by individuals who feel they have been aggrieved." Elsewhere the committee says "in complex circumstances it may be advisable to invite a telephone call from the person requesting the reference or to supplement a letter with a telephone call." And finally, "there is a growing trend for liabil-

ity suits to be brought by the recipients of letters of reference for a 'failure to warn,' and the responsibility of writers of letters of reference to their recipients is increasingly reflected in the law." The "failure to warn" notion refers to the possibility that Children's Hospital could be in a position to sue the three unwise men.

As I skimmed the obituary page of the January 7, 1982, *New York Times*, my attention was caught first by an unusual name, then by the breadth of grief it had evoked. That day, the passing of Sylvia Mook received eleven separate notices, nearly eleven column-inches of type, from her family and friends, and from associates in the various political, social, and religious groups with which she apparently was affiliated. One notice referred to "the fullness of her . . . life and her splendid contribution towards making the world a better place." Others called her an "outstanding supporter," an "advocate of religious freedom," a "dear friend," and "a true lady who was loved by all." Then there were the isolated adjectives: beloved (six times), cherished, devoted, loving, adored, dedicated, outstanding, esteemed.

By all those accounts, Sylvia Mook had been a remarkable individual. The style and extent of the notices reminded me of that fundamental doctrine, *The less one seems able to say, the more ways one finds of saying it*. Struck by the one point of analogy, I soon came to see others.

Like the besieged high school teacher, the typical mourner begins by murmuring, "I don't know what to say," but eventually puts together a few hundred words of undiluted encomium for the deceased to console the bereaved. Even the most despicable miscreant is sent off with a good word or two, because an almost universal belief in man's innate worth, capacity for good, and potential for salvation declares that in elegy or eulogy one is never really lying. Occasionally, when a

preacher or graveside speaker is not up on the loved one's attributes, it is fitting, right, and just to coach the ignorant for the sake of bringing off the occasion. Death, then, is the place where seldom is heard a truly negative word. Those who breach that rule are often seen casting their eyes upward in fear of retribution.

Written evidence furthers the analogy, for the same custom of unmitigated regard is observed in the letter of condolence and the death notice. The *Director's and Officer's Complete Letter Book* provides a form letter of condolence, "general rules" on how to use it, and "alternate [sic] phrases"; minor alterations would easily transubstantiate the book's basic form to a letter of recommendation:

So-and-So Co.:

Dear [Mrs. Jones]:

am pleased

I [was] greatly [shocked] to recommend John Jones.

[Learn yesterday of your husband's death.] I have known John almost from the moment he joined this organization sixteen years ago, and our close and friendly association [was] a source of enjoyment to me.

is

John [was] loved by his co-

has

workers and he always [had] a friendly word for everyone. His

is

cheerful disposition [was] an inspiration to all of us. He will be greatly missed by his many friends here at the company.

Consider yourself fortunate, So-and-So Co.

[Our thoughts are with you, Mrs. Jones], and we extend to John warmest regards. [You] our [deepest sympathy].

All the palaver of official mourning is utterly meaningless to its subject, the deceased. And in the end, no amount of flattery is going to influence that almighty admissions officer and omni-employer on high—although some faiths hold that prayer constitutes a direct line to Him or Her, for those who think a follow-up call might be helpful. □

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PUZZLE

Multiple Choice

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

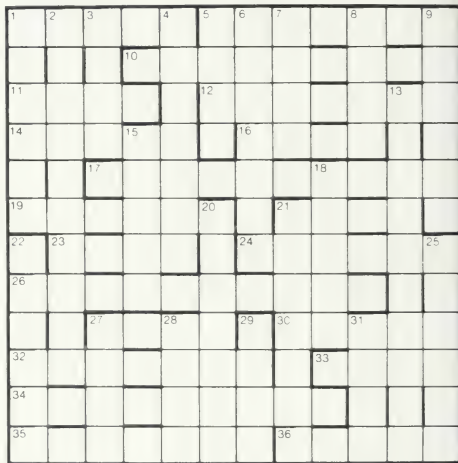
This month's instructions:

There are forty clues, the answers to which are to be treated in one of four ways (ten clues each way). The treatments are:

1. Entered normally
2. Entered backward
3. Replaced by a word opposite in meaning
4. Replaced by the second of an "and" pair, as "milk and honey," *War and Peace*, or "now and then." (N.B. One is redundant.)

One entry in the diagram is hyphenated. The answer to the clue at 6 Down is somewhat uncommon. The answers at 36 Across and 7 Down are common variant spellings. N.B. The meaning of an answer as clued may not be the same as that needed to apply treatment 3 or 4. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The answer to last month's puzzle appears on page 75.



CLUES

ACROSS

1. Flexible drunk, that guy (5)
5. Ingredient for relishes or jams (7)
10. Without ties (loud, reflective, too lewd) (9)
11. Harold takes lead in first part of football game (4)
12. Western heroes intimidate some youngsters (7)
14. French monetary unit briefly set off worries (5)
16. Short, short cheese (4)
17. Significant name in Gulf resorts (10)
19. Yelp after I returned to get on board (6)
21. Flashy pair left, returned (4)
23. Back to give out... it's age (4)
24. Those with cultivation become heartless travelers (6)
26. Good am I in lasting marriages, no good am I in most (10)
27. Gluttons with energy put back in high school (4)
30. Bloodshot look repulsed veteran, comparatively (5)
32. Shutting up about being beaten (7)
33. Privation confines lower class (4)
34. Noodles the pigs ate, almost sloppily (9)
35. Bellow during a street attack (7)
36. Grows old, an expression of what to do when put out to pasture (5)

DOWN

1. The prosecutor's describing the lady's flings (6)
2. The kind of churchgoer that scrambles to transept (10)
3. Active vehicle yard (4)
4. Give the air to passenger who pays with flourish (7)
5. Peg's brought up to be a minx (4)
6. Stolen goods dealer takes in first-class glazed earthenware (7)
7. Romantic interlude sounds passive (4)
8. Shellfish or carp (4)
9. Plaster cannon (6)
13. A trial degenerates into pity and bias (10)
15. Crude or contrary—that's awful (5)
18. Evergreen shrub planted in edging or seedframe (5)
20. Smuggled old white wine and rifle (7)
21. Gee, sailor is disturbed by parts of the Mass (7)
22. A fruit's pronounced self-confidence (6)
25. Impales small, nasty little bugs (6)
27. Clod's heart flipped without any feeling (4)
28. I beg to be corrected for a taunt (4)
29. It's shrewd making the conclusion to prosecute (4)
31. Top off ice mound (4)

CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Multiple Choice, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by May 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive a one-

year subscription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the June issue. Winners' names will be printed in the July issue. Winners of the March puzzle, "March Dodecahedron," are D. D. Freund, Waukesha, Wisconsin; Cynthia Wells, Ottawa, Ontario; and George Whitney, Pass Christian, Mississippi.

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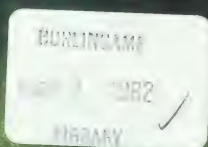
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11 mg "tar," 0.6 mg nicotine
av. per cigarette, FTC Report Mar'61

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Lights



The spirit of Marlboro
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In Defense of Quality

Considerations of the federal budget, when they get around to defense spending, tend to reignite the debate over quality versus quantity in military hardware.

Within the funding available for defense procurement, is the nation better off buying larger numbers of simpler aircraft, missiles, tanks, and ships? Or are national defense and security better served with fewer units of equipment that's more advanced technologically and provides greater performance and capability? Such equipment is necessarily more costly, for the same reason that a 10-speed bike costs more than a 3-speeder.

The advocates of quantity argue that sheer numbers count for more in combat than the quality of the hardware. The central flaw in this contention is that low-technology weaponry in many cases cannot do the job in our high-technology times.

Take fighter aircraft as an example. To be sure, there are combat arenas where large numbers of less advanced fighters could deliver better results than smaller numbers of more sophisticated and expensive planes. But the reality of aerial combat is that conditions are generally less than ideal. They are unlikely to be suited to the use of simpler planes. Wars aren't always fought from 8 to 5 with crystal skies.

What about nighttime operations? Adverse weather? The need to penetrate enemy defenses? In the face of such demands, the test of combat could not be met by planes that are blind in the dark or murky and are armed with visual-range missiles. What these missions require are high-performance aircraft equipped with electronics to see and sense things their crews

cannot, and weapons that can find and destroy targets even when they're shrouded in darkness or clouds.

Similar failings apply to ground-based and seagoing equipment that's simpler in design and ability and hence less costly:

- tanks too lightly armored to stand up to the pounding of enemy fire;
- ships lacking electronic brains, eyes, and ears for long-range surveillance and strike;
- carriers incapable of launching powerful attack aircraft;
- submarines without the range and endurance provided by nuclear propulsion.

Austere weaponry certainly has a place in America's defense arsenal. But it cannot substitute, whatever its quantity, for equipment delivering the greater performance and versatility made possible by electronics and other advanced technologies.

The Soviets' military production is awesome. They spend 15% of their gross national product for military purposes, compared with 6% for the U.S. Last year they built five times as many fighters and fighter-bombers as the U.S., seven times as many armored personnel carriers, five times as many tanks, three times as many ICBMs.

At this time, there is no way the U.S. can match the Soviet Union in *quantity* of weaponry. Where we must excel is in *quality*. We must design and build into our equipment the highest useful quality and capability that technology can provide. (Even so, that shouldn't mean "gold-plating," or overdesigning to deliver unneeded performance at great cost.)

When American lives and security interests are at stake, second best isn't good enough.



**UNITED
TECHNOLOGIES**

Harper's

JUNE 1982

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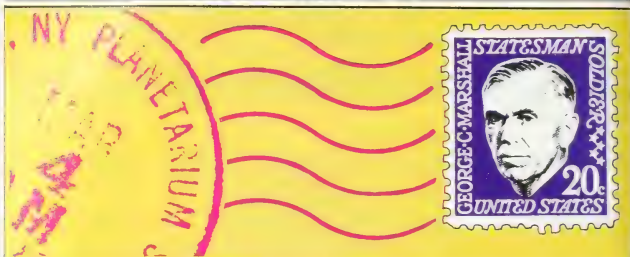
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR are very welcome, especially if they are short and typed double-spaced. We enjoy hearing from readers, even though volume precludes individual acknowledgment.

LETTERS



Planet of the apes

What in the name of all that is (pardon the expression) holy induced the editor of *Harper's* to print the vitriolic drivel of Gene Lyons in the guise of a legitimate article about Arkansas's creation-science law ["Repealing the Enlightenment," *Harper's*, April]? Lyons's smug arrogance, coupled with a liberal dose of ignorance, adds nothing to a serious consideration of today's vital problems.

Lyons attempts to overwhelm the great unwashed rabble (us) with his own self-admitted superiority over his fellow Arkansians, whom he labels yokels and ignoramuses, revealing more about his own prejudices than about the subject under consideration. And by what process of reasoning does Lyons conclude that the Arkansas law was a hoax? By the simple expedient of rejecting out of hand the notion that there can exist on this planet an intelligent, intellectually honest human being who happens to hold an opinion Lyons does not share.

What is worse, he studiously avoids coming to grips with some basic issues, not the least of which is why the federal courts are sitting in judgment over matters of school curriculum in the first place. In the guise of constitutional interpretation, the Supreme Court has endowed the federal judiciary with the power to make many critical decisions, including those that rightfully belong to the people responsible for the education of our children. That the federal courts can override the will of the people, as in the Arkansas case, does not mean that the people are wrong and the courts are right, either morally or constitutionally. It is only to say that the courts have lost the word.

What can the people do? They

cannot vote the rascals out and impeachment is a virtual impossibility. One way that some citizens have attempted to cope is to pass legislation. They then find themselves required to defend that legislation within the artificial confines of a legal trial, where it is the judges themselves who call the shots.

ARLENE N. HEATH
San Francisco, Calif.

Nauseating

I regret that *Harper's* was used as a vehicle to spread the stench by James Kennesson, who wrote the article "China Stinks" in the April issue. I can't believe that such a distinguished magazine would want to nauseate its readers with such undigested material. It is obviously the work of a constipated and jaundiced man who had just spent a year in outlandish and poverty-stricken Zhengzhou, where there was no running water, toilet, or other amenities of life to which Mr. Kennesson had been so accustomed in Indianapolis.

CHARLES D. SCOTT
Dallas, Tex.

After two years of teaching in Wuhan, a city not unlike Zhengzhou, I can agree with much of James Kennesson's harsh depiction of life in China. Some of his assertions about living conditions, however, seem far too generalized to reflect accurately a society as complex and populous as China's. Nor does Kennesson note the modest revitalization of cultural activities and ordinary street life that has taken place in the past two years, including the importation of a number of foreign films and the reappearance of itinerant circuses and acrobats.

Far from losing our "faith in

progress," my wife and I were impressed and encouraged by the strength of the Chinese. We saw abundant signs of vitality and of individual happiness, sustained under admittedly difficult, oppressive conditions, and we never felt that the friendship we received from ordinary people in our travels around China was forced.

The turbulence of her recent history makes any fair judgment of China today almost impossible, but perhaps Kenneson's perceptions were unduly affected by his disappointment at being unable to settle there for life. He writes with all the tact of a bridegroom jilted at the altar.

IAN H. MUNRO
Liberty, Mo.

Cold comfort

The same evening I finished reading *Why We Were in Vietnam* by Norman Podhoretz. I picked up the review of it by Arthur J. Schlesinger, Jr. ["Make War Not It," *Harper's*, March]. Paragraph by paragraph, the review misstates the argument it purports to summarize. This struck me as odd, for I remembered—and immediately reread—the argument by Professor Schlesinger in *The Bitter Heritage* (1967), a central paragraph of which reads as follows:

In retrospect, Vietnam is a triumph of the politics of inadvantage. We have achieved our present entanglement, not after due and deliberate consideration, but through a series of small decisions. It is not only idle but unfair to seek out guilty men. . . . The Vietnam story is a tragedy without villains.

The laziness of mind hidden behind Schlesinger's concept of "inadvantage"—an inadvertence maintained over some thirty years, nourished by widely discussed doctrines, upheld by administration after administration, and surrendered only when underlying doctrines shifted—does not compare favorably to the sustained rigor Podhoretz applies to the same materials. What Podhoretz and Schlesinger do share, however, is the sense that good and moral men, from a good and moral nation, following good and moral principles, became involved in tragedy. Many others, alas, assert that those who led that war were criminals.

Schlesinger thinks that Podhoretz's analysis is faulty because he gives too much attention to the New Left, and too little to establishment figures like George Ball, Hans Morgenthau, Sen. William Fulbright, George Kennan, Roger Hilsman, and others.

But Podhoretz does report the arguments of such persons, and at proportionate length. Perhaps, though, Podhoretz recognizes how peripheral such men really were to the heart of the antiwar movement. In any case, it is not Schlesinger's "inadvertence" that has come to dominate the imagination of the world; it is, rather, the views of those considerably to the left of Schlesinger, such as Frances FitzGerald, Susan Sontag, Mary McCarthy, Jean La-Couture, Günter Grass, and others—the view that in Vietnam the United States became as immoral as the Nazis.

Along with Munich, Vietnam is the most potent political symbol of recent American experience. Like all symbols, its meanings are many, subtle, and not at all what we at first take them to be. No one has faced them as bravely as Podhoretz. Readers who opposed the war for moral reasons, as I did, will find their consciences healthily challenged. His is not a book for those who read for comfort. It cannot have comforted Schlesinger.

MICHAEL NOVAK
Washington, D.C.

Porn

We subscribe to *Harper's* in an effort to provide reading material of a little higher quality than that ordinarily found in automotive waiting rooms. Many of our customers are women and not interested in reading *Hot Rod* and trade publications.

Recently, on a rare occasion, I picked up the April issue of *Harper's* just after it arrived. I was extremely glad I did. On page 22 is language you would expect to find in pornographic bookstores. Your magazine was immediately removed from its place in our magazine rack.

It is a great disappointment to see a magazine with the class and reputation of *Harper's* resorting to something like this to fill its pages.

CHRISTOPHER M. CLIFTON
Clifton General Tire Co.
Nashville, Tenn.

We give up

The sellout of such a formerly fine magazine is disgusting. To be brief, *Harper's*, not China, stinks. Cancel my subscription as soon as possible, and whoever you are, Mr. Kinsley, you're in over your head. I can only pray you're not a wayward Texan trying to make a name for yourself in Big New York.

EVALYN W. HARTMANN
Richmond, Tex.

I've been reading *Harper's* for some fifty years, since my high school days. Your April issue is just about the best in the past half century. If there is a shortage of this issue in the Chelsea neighborhood, it's because I've cornered the local market for copies to distribute among my friends.

ABRAHAM ELLIS
New York, N.Y.

Report from the Letters Lady

As readers can imagine, we receive far more letters about the articles in *Harper's* than we can hope to publish. So, starting this month, we'll be running a short report that'll give you an idea of what comes in our mailbox.

Your hail of uniformly indignant letters defending Wilderness against William Tucker's March article, "Is Nature Too Good for Us?" has tended to sound the same after a while. So save your time, gentle reader, and ours—because we won't be publishing any more of them. I'm afraid the same goes for letters about David Owen's March piece, "The Secret Lives of Dentists," though we've been very pleased at the strong reactions, almost equally pro and con, it's provoked among its hard-working subjects. Dentists really seem to feel it when the layman pays a bit of notice, so take the hint. Be extra nice on your next visit.

Any notice is bad notice to Eli Siegel's followers, the Aesthetic Realists. The "Victims of the Press," as they sign themselves, have been out in force after Hugh Kenner's mildly critical remarks about their movement in his April piece, "Contempt Causes Insanity." The Victims' policy is to demand a published rebuttal of the insult, but I'm afraid this is all they're going to get. Till next month, then. □



THE EASY CHAIR



REAGAN'S INDUSTRIAL TONIC

by Michael Kinsley

Does anyone around here believe in capitalism?

THE ECONOMY is dead in the water," said Treasury secretary Donald Regan, not usually so expressive, on April 14. The same day, the Federal Reserve Board reported that the nation's industrial production was down 3.3 percent for the first quarter of 1982, and down 8.3 percent from last summer, when Congress passed President Reagan's Economic Recovery Act. That enormous change in the nation's tax laws laid special emphasis on stimulating new business investment. Yet a Commerce Department survey published early this year indicated that businesses plan to invest fewer constant dollars in new plant and equipment in 1982 than they did in 1981.

What's gone wrong? Another burst of eloquence from Secretary Regan: "High rates of interest have brought this economy right to its knees." But high interest rates just express a mathematical reality:

when the pool of money available for borrowing is not increasing, and the amount claimed by the federal government is, there is less for other borrowers. The Reagan administration has been quite hypocritical about the Federal Reserve's tight money policy: happily taking credit for the slowing of inflation, but denying responsibility for the recession that is an inevitable side effect of monetary policy acting alone.

Reagan has been even more hypocritical about the federal deficit. Addressing Congress in February 1981, he presented the deficit as the very symbol of government profligacy and dissipation, "a stack of thousand-dollar bills sixty-seven miles high," and said flatly, "Inflation results from all that government spending." He promised a balanced budget by 1984. Despite the growly noises, this was nothing new. Every year since 1975, the president has produced a three-year plan with

a balanced budget in the third year. The plans come and go, and so do the presidents, but we never get past year one. This February, however, Reagan broke the daisy chain. His annual budget predicted a deficit of \$82.9 billion in fiscal 1984 and \$71.9 billion in fiscal 1985. Less sanguine, the Congressional Budget Office predicted \$188 billion in 1984 and \$208 billion in 1985. In April, the White House amended its prediction to \$93.8 billion in 1984. At this rate, that stack of thousand-dollar bills could be 111 miles high at the end of Reagan's term.

The president's budget message contained some wonderful passages explaining why the dramatic change from last year was not his fault. Reagan blamed, first, "the recession now under way." This recession is a big surprise to him, even though when he took office he described the economy as "the worst mess since the Great Depression." Prosperity was supposed to be the result of Reagan's economic plan, but apparently it is also a precondition of it. Once things get better, his plan will start to work, and things will get better.

Second, the president blamed "interest payments on our trillion-dollar debt" caused by "the misguided policies of the past," summarized as "the discredited philosophy of spend and spend, borrow and borrow." Reagan forgot to mention, when he promised a balanced budget last year, that first we had to unload that trillion-dollar stack he's so obsessed with. His own record deficits should not be confused with an intention to "spend and spend, borrow and borrow." Reagan's deficits are caused by his predecessors. His predecessors' were caused by "misguided policies."

Reagan also blamed lower inflation for reducing tax revenues (ironic, that), and Congress for failing to adopt every last penny of his budget cuts. But he somehow failed to mention his own tax-cut bill. The version Congress passed last summer, unless amended, will drain away federal revenues at an ever faster rate for the rest of this decade. Together with huge defense increases

this will make a balanced budget, or anything like it, impossible.

THE CULPRIT here is not the three-year tax cut for individuals, which has gotten most of the attention and is coming under the most scrutiny as Congress looks for ways to make the deficits less frightening. It is the radical change in the way businesses are taxed, amounting to a virtual abolition of the corporate income tax. The cost of this change is small in the early years, which is why it got less attention than it deserved during last year's tax debate. But the cost becomes huge as the new system is phased in, which is why the long-range budget outlook is now so bleak.

There has been, and will be, no tax cut for most people, because inflationary "bracket creep" will cancel out the tax-rate reductions in each bracket. The 1982 "Economic Report of the President" predicts that the median-income household, now in a 24 percent tax bracket, will be in a 25 percent bracket when the cuts are finished in 1984. Citizens for Tax Justice, a labor-backed tax-study group (who supplied most of the following statistics) estimates that after social security increases are considered, workers earning \$30,000 a year or less when the cuts started will be paying an *increased* share of their income in taxes by the time the "cuts" are finished. (For those already in the top bracket, with investment income, which got the biggest cut and is not subject to social security, it's a very different story.)

For businesses, by contrast, the cuts will amount to half a trillion dollars by the end of the decade (another thirty-four miles on Reagan's tack). The corporate contribution to federal revenues will have dropped from 25 percent in the mid-1960s to below 5 percent, heading toward zero.

So what? Isn't the whole purpose of the exercise to increase capital formation by reducing the tax on capital? Isn't the theory of supply-side economics that prosperity will

come for all when taxation stops thwarting the workings of a free economy? Yes, but last year's tax cut was not a "supply side" exercise, if that means getting out of the way and letting free-market capitalism go to work. Instead, it was a complex web of artificial subsidies that distorts the free market. And high interest rates, caused mainly by the prospect of huge federal deficits, caused mainly by the tax cut, are preventing business executives from responding to the new incentives the tax cut creates.

Supply-siders used to claim that tax cuts would pay for themselves by generating new economic activity, and thus new tax revenues. A more recent, and modest, claim is that increased personal savings, thanks to the cuts, will put more into the capital markets than the deficits are taking out. But William Fellner, an economist at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, figures that personal savings will have to increase 50 percent by 1985 just to cover that year's estimated deficit, before a single dollar

will be available for new capital formation. So it seems that President Reagan's "Economic Recovery" tax cut itself is one of the biggest roadblocks to economic recovery.

THE centerpiece of President Reagan's plan to save American capitalism is the Accelerated Cost Recovery System (ACRS) for depreciation of capital investments. Depreciation is the amount businesses get to deduct from their taxes to reflect the wearing out of plant and equipment. ACRS permits businesses to "write off" investments far faster than they're wearing out. This break effectively lowers the tax on the profits from that investment. ACRS also retains and expands the "investment tax credit," a gimmick from the 1960s that, in essence, has the government kicking in 10 percent of the cost of most business investments (6 percent for cars and trucks).

One explanation for changing the rules was that inflation had been



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cheating businesses of valid depreciation deductions by eroding their value over long periods of time. (Inflation also *helps* businesses that make investments with borrowed money, by eroding the burden of their debt; *Fortune* magazine reported that before ACRS these two effects roughly canceled each other out.) But ACRS goes beyond correcting for inflation, to offer a positive break for investment.

Artificial incentives for investment are a very dubious idea in general. Study after study of the old investment tax credit has shown that it produces less than a dollar of new investment for every dollar it costs the government. This is because most of the investments that get the break would be made anyway. It's a very expensive way to create new investment—more expensive, for example, than if the government simply bought a lot of factories and gave them away.

ACRS, though, even goes beyond a tax break. It amounts to a *negative* tax on many kinds of investments. That is, the deductions and credits are so generous that they wipe out all the tax on the investment, with some left over to reduce the taxes on other investments. Thus ACRS can even turn a money-losing investment (before taxes) into a profitable one (after taxes). This is alchemy indeed, but not necessarily healthy for the economy. Losing money is capitalism's little way of telling you that you may be making a mistake. A tax system that discourages profitable investments is unfortunate, as the supply-siders say. But a tax system that encourages unprofitable ones is disastrous. It drains capital from investments with real economic value into those with none. It drains government revenue with *no* productive payoff. And it destroys jobs, by encouraging the replacement of labor with machines in situations where efficiency alone would not justify the switch.

Citizens for Tax Justice calculates that, under the new rules, the effective corporate tax rate on different investments varies from a positive 37 percent, for industrial buildings,

to a negative 53 percent, for office equipment. As the system is phased in and inflation declines, the tax rate on office equipment will reach negative 194 percent in 1986. This stacking of the deck will destroy the economy's ability to allocate capital where it can be most productive. Just as everyone is coming to agree that American management concentrates too much on short-term pay-offs and not enough on long-range goals, ACRS creates a special prejudice against long-term investments. As CTJ puts it, "an investment in industrial plant will have to be more than four times as profitable before tax as an investment in office equipment or trucks in order to earn the same after-tax return." The harm to our prosperity from this distortion of investment decisions will far outweigh the benefit of any increase in total investments.

Companies with a lot of assets under ACRS will soon owe no taxes at all, and will have no way to take advantage of "negative" tax rates on further investments. That's where "tax leasing" comes in. This refinement, also in last year's tax bill, is intended to make sure that companies don't lose out on tax incentives just because they owe no taxes. These companies may sell their tax benefits to other companies, through a complicated and fictional transaction somewhat like a welfare mother's selling her children to an affluent childless couple, so the tax deduction doesn't go to waste, then leasing them back for her own use and enjoyment. This device was intended for corporate welfare cases like Chrysler, but it will be equally useful to profitable companies with more deductions and credits than they can use.

Artificial investment incentives to money-losing companies are even more dubious than incentives to money-making ones, and "tax leasing" is an extraordinarily inefficient way to go about it. In order to avoid the embarrassment of simply sending a government welfare check to big corporations, "tax leasing" allows millions of dollars to be siphoned off the top by the lawyers and bankers who arrange the com-

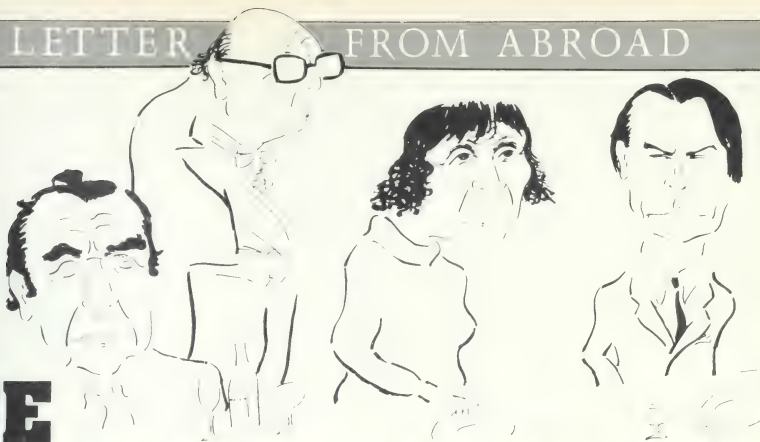
plex deals, and by the tax-owning companies who "purchase" the tax losses.



OTHER aspects of President Reagan's economic program belie the claim that this is a "supply side" administration, dedicated to increasing economic productivity. The program leaves untouched the tax deduction for consumer credit, which drains billions from the pool available for investment. Reagan's social welfare cuts are structured in a way that drastically increases the "marginal tax rate" on the working poor; the slightest outside income will now push a poor person out of Reagan's vaunted "safety net." Other social welfare cuts have slashed the nation's investment in "human capital": job training and health care. Different cuts will hasten the deterioration of our economic infrastructure: bridges, highways, sewers, and so on. These social and physical investments are crucial to a healthy economy. To hold back on them because they involve government, while showering billions in useless incentives on private business, is not a sign of seriousness about economic revival.

The great call on the Left these days is for national economic planning under various labels, such as government investment banking or regional development authorities or Japanese-style business-government cooperation. By whatever name, say the Reagan administration and its supporters, this amounts to capital allocation by government dictate rather than by the workings of the free market. But what the Reagan administration has produced, at enormous expense, is capital allocation neither by government dictate nor by the free market. The economy may well be suffering from what doctors call an iatrogenic illness: a disease caused by an attempted cure. If President Reagan really believes in American capitalism, he ought to pull the plug on all these extraordinary life-support measures, and see if the patient can make it on his own.

LETTER FROM ABROAD



Marc Boxer

THE NICE PEOPLE'S PARTY

Britain's Social Democrats stand forthrightly against nastiness. It's not much of a governing principle, but it's working at the polls.

by Alexander Chancellor

GREAT BRITAIN normally has parliamentary elections only once every four or five years, so the British must get their political thrills most of the time by monitoring by-elections—special elections to fill seats that become vacant through death or resignation. In what the British press heralded as “the by-election of the century,” the citizens of a middle-class district of Glasgow returned the Right Honourable Roy Harris Jenkins to Parliament on March 26. Mr. Jenkins was representing the Social Democratic Party, founded last year with the declared intent of “breaking the mold” of British politics. His victory in what had been a safe Conservative seat restored the SDP's momentum after it had peaked and begun to decline in the opinion polls. It also secured Mr. Jenkins's role as the SDP's natural leader.

At the age of sixty-one, Mr. Jenkins is the oldest and most experienced of the new party's four founders, known universally as the

Alexander Chancellor is editor of the Spectator of London.

Gang of Four. He is also the one who looks much the most convincingly like a potential prime minister. Indeed, he nearly was prime minister, having once been deputy leader of the Labor Party and Harold Wilson's chosen successor. After he lost the top job to James Callaghan in 1975, he sulked off to Brussels to preside over the European Economic Community (the “Common Market”).

This appeared to be the end of Mr. Jenkins's political career. By taking a highly paid job as an international civil servant, he was seen by most of his “comrades” in the Labor Party as a traitor almost as despicable as the Soviet agent Sir Anthony Blunt. Not that Mr. Jenkins had ever been much of a “comrade.” This was not the fault of his background, which was just right for the workingman's party. Comradeship is just not part of his character. His grandfather was a Welsh coal miner. So was his father, briefly, though he later rose rapidly within the trade-union movement, even studying for a couple of years in Paris, and ended up a member of

Parliament with a comfortable house and a live-in maid. Mr. Jenkins's parents, in other words, had been moving up the social ladder, and young Roy continued the climb.

He went to Balliol College, Oxford, where the best minds go, and managed there to lose any trace of a Welsh accent. He was very clever. Enjoying the patronage of the prime minister, Clement Attlee, a friend of his father's, he sailed into the House of Commons in 1948, at the age of twenty-seven. As soon as the Labor Party emerged, in 1964, from fourteen years in opposition, Mr. Jenkins was rapidly promoted through the government ranks. During the Wilson era, he held two of the highest offices in the state—home secretary and chancellor of the exchequer. As home secretary, Jenkins was a promoter of the “permissive society” (rechristened by him the “civilized society”), helping to liberalize the laws on obscenity, abortion, and homosexuality. But he also tried to keep Britain clean by refusing entry to George Raft, an actor with unsavory connections. As chancellor (equivalent to Treasury

secretary), he was the hero of conservatives, imposing a tough credit squeeze and achieving a balance of payments surplus for the first time in years.

Mr. Jenkins fell out with his party over British membership in the Common Market, a cause that he enthusiastically supported, even while anti-Market sentiment was concentrated in the Labor Party. He was not forgiven, because he wasn't popular anyway. He had never taken sides in the class war. Indeed, he seems to prefer claret to beer and the company of duchesses to that of trade unionists. He wears well-cut suits and shiny shoes. He likes staying in large country houses; in fact, the last time I saw him he was off to lunch at Castle Howard, the Yorkshire palace used as the setting for "Brideshead Revisited." Mr. Jenkins's favorite ball game is croquet, which can be played only on country house lawns.

Detached, diffident, snobbish—Roy Jenkins got where he is by virtue of his ability and ambition. He was never propelled by zeal for socialism—or for anything else. As one unkind Labor M.P. once put it, "The only thing that Roy Jenkins ever fought for was a table for two at the Mirabelle" (a very expensive London restaurant).

BUT a political party cannot get as far as the SDP already has simply because one man wishes to be prime minister. The new party could never have prospered without a widespread desire for some realistic alternative to the two main parties, Labor and Conservative. Both of these are widely seen not only to have failed in government but, each in its own way, to have become rather nasty.

The Conservatives are led by the so-called "Iron Lady," Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, a convert to monetarist theories of economics who appears to be bent on changing the economic framework within which both Conservative and Labor governments have been content to operate since the Second World

War. The role of the state is to be reduced, nationalized industries are to be returned to private enterprise, and inefficient industries are to be allowed to die, whatever the cost in unemployment. Such policies imply pain and conflict—they appear "ideological" and "divisive." More upsetting than her policies, though, which in reality are not at all extreme, is Mrs. Thatcher's zealous and uncompromising character.

In an editorial just over a year ago, *The Times* spoke for a lot of soggy British middle-class opinion when it called for "a gentler approach to life." "Mrs. Thatcher is a health visitor," it said. "She is, as she said herself, the kind of nurse who bounces you out of bed the day after the operation." Compare the Thatcher approach with Mr. Jenkins's one-sentence summary of his political beliefs: "I believe in introducing humanitarian conscience and reform: concern for those who don't easily survive in a rough world." This is definitely the "gentler approach."

But Mrs. Thatcher is niceness itself compared with the nastiness that now characterizes her main opposition. The Labor Party has always been a loose coalition embracing Marxists, trade unionists, and middle-class intellectuals with social consciences. The middle-class element, exemplified by Mr. Jenkins, has recently been losing its traditional preeminence. The crypto-communists on the left of the party have been rapidly taking control of the party by cunning and often brutal tactics. They have managed to commit Labor to a set of extravagantly left-wing policies—more state control of the economy, abolition of private schools, unilateral nuclear disarmament, trade protectionism, and withdrawal from the Common Market. For many of the comfortable Labor moderates there has seemed to be no possible future in such a party.

The Gang of Four, the founders of the SDP, are in fact all refugees from Labor. *The Times* editorial I've already quoted, written while Mr. Jenkins was still in exile over the water, picked Shirley Williams

as a potential SDP prime minister on the grounds that she is simply very much nicer than Margaret Thatcher. A lifelong member of the Labor Party, Mrs. Williams is indeed about as different from the severe Mrs. Thatcher as it is possible to be. She is muddled and indecisive, eager and friendly, always ready to listen and to learn. She scurries about the country like a little furry animal, wearing sensible, rather girlish clothes, her hair in a mess, conveying to all and sundry an impression of both idealism and moderation. She appears—and no doubt is—both generous and compassionate. At Christmas she hurt herself in a tobogganing accident, no less, and now scurries about even more endearingly on crutches.

As education secretary in previous Labor governments, Mrs. Williams was responsible, out of a misguided egalitarianism, for ruining the state education system. She has long identified herself with some of the worst of trade-union excesses. But these failings are either forgiven or forgotten. She is, by general consent, enormously popular. *The Times* explains why: "Mrs. Williams has a personal character that very large numbers of British people can relate to. . . . [She] talks to the British people in her own accents, sometimes muddled, often courageous, always kind."

The other two members of the Gang of Four are also former Cabinet ministers. Dr. David Owen, a handsome young physician with a pretty American wife, enjoyed a meteoric rise in the last Labor government, becoming foreign secretary at the age of thirty-eight. It was believed by the aging prime minister, James Callaghan (the one who beat out Roy Jenkins for the job), that this cocky, dynamic, and youthful individual would be just the person to buff up the "special relationship" with the young whiz kids of President Carter's new administration in Washington. It wasn't a great success. Finally, there is the lugubrious William Rodgers, a less glamorous administrator who was once defense minister, but who, unlike the others, enjoys a solid political

power base in the depressed North-east of England.

WHAT the Gang of Four had in common was despondency at loss of office and a feeling of rejection by the new, left-wing bosses of the Labor Party. They wanted out, but where were they to go?

They could have joined the Liberals, an ancient but now insignificant party, with whom they were in agreement on most important issues. But as ambitious political heavyweights, they had no wish to lose themselves in a small, rather eccentric organization with neither the experience of, nor the possibility of, nor even the taste for power. So they decided to form their own party, which they could present to the British public as something fresh and new. The SDP has formed an electoral alliance with the Liberals, who have an established political organization and regional pockets of loyal support. But they can claim at the same time that they are offering a convincing substitute for what *The Times* called the "two grimacing skeletons of political despair," thus hoping to attract the support of disillusioned voters who, from long experience, felt unable to take the Liberals seriously. This strategy has worked remarkably well. The SDP now has millions of supporters and more than 80,000 active, paid-up members—not bad for one year's work. According to an opinion poll, 67 percent of the members have never joined any other political party.

The freshness and newness of the SDP reside in this 67 percent, and not in the familiar old Gang of Four or in the further twenty-four members of Parliament (all but one Labor) who have defected to it over the past year. According to that poll, 57 percent of SDP members belong to the professional and managerial classes, and 10 percent have jobs described as "clerical/office/sales." Only 7 percent admitted to being manual workers, and of these more than two thirds are skilled workers or foremen. This is there-

fore a middle-class party, whose members give as their principal reason for joining it a desire to "break the mold," to occupy the "middle ground," and to end "extremism" and "polarization."

Thus the SDP's appeal. Fresh and pure as a snowdrop, it not only rejects ideology but is so far untainted by vested interests. The Labor Party's power base is a selfish trade-union movement. The Conservative Party depends on the support of vulgar business and industrial interests. But the SDP belongs, as it boasts, to its individual members. For the first time ever, the professional middle class—sensible, decent, compassionate, patriotic—has a serious political party all its own. The doorbell rang the other day at my home in a rather depressed borough of west London, inhabited principally by Irish laborers. It was an SDP candidate for the borough council, a well-dressed young man in his twenties carrying a briefcase. I asked him what he did for a living. He said he was an economic forecaster for Rothschilds Bank. Never before has Hammersmith attracted a candidate of such distinction.

THE POLICIES of the SDP still amount to little more than a rejection of sin. The party stands for "a healthy public sector and a healthy private sector," for an end to poverty, unemployment, and inflation. It also stands for classlessness and international cooperation. Classlessness and internationalism—these are its two distinctive features. They are worth examining.

The ideal of classlessness is the ideal of those who don't know where they belong, of those—like the Gang of Four—who enjoy the social mobility that too many Englishmen are supposed to lack. Such people look to the United States, a country in which, many Britons suppose, it is possible to be rich and grand and clever without feeling cut off from the lower orders. Adlai Stevenson, Averell Harriman, John Kennedy—these are the heroes of Mr. Jenkins and his friends (Dr.

Owen even looks like a Kennedy, though I doubt if a Kennedy would comb his hair in public). In England it is impossible to put on a decent suit of clothes without implying disdain for the workingman. That is why internationalism and classlessness amount to much the same thing, for classlessness only seems to exist abroad: not only in the United States, but on the continent of Europe as well. Somehow the French and the Germans can also behave like Mr. Jenkins without stirring up class hatred. Why can't the British be more like everybody else?

Another of the SDP's vague objectives is to make Britain "modern." It is the same cry that brought Labor to power in 1964, when Harold Wilson promised us a technological revolution. Once again the United States is the model. The party is already adopting American campaigning methods, albeit on a modest scale, hoping thus to show up the traditional parties as old-fashioned and fuddy-duddy. It accepts credit cards for membership dues. It has engaged a high-flying advertising and public relations firm to inundate the media with glossy folders and to invent an entirely new vocabulary—the Gang of Four becoming "principals," their aides, "hand-holders," and their main London office, an "operations center" with "backup systems" all over the place. The leaders like to have planes and boats on standby. In a new departure for Britain, they are even planning to raise funds through pop concerts and other show-business events.

The main danger for the SDP is its confidence in its own virtue. Unlike the two big parties, which are obliged to take account of the nastier prejudices of their supporters, the SDP looks down on such prejudices with contempt. So, perhaps, it should. But there is a conflict here between its talk of greater democracy, decentralization, and so on, and what appears to be a strong streak of authoritarianism. One senses that the real yearning of the SDP is to bring a governing elite of especially nice people to power. □

CAPITALISM OBSERVED



LAWN ORDER

by Timothy F. Bannon

Call in the high-tech horticulturists,
or it's all over for your grass.

ONCE UPON a time, the average homeowner could reasonably discharge his responsibilities to the neighborhood by mowing his lawn weekly and watering it regularly during the dry days of summer. Occasionally, these responsibilities would produce tensions, such as those most memorably exemplified by the often tempestuous relationship between Chester A. Riley and his malingering son, Junior. More often than not, however, they could be performed without great investments of time and money, and certainly without reliance on vast technological

Timothy F. Bannon is a lawn-free lawyer who lives in Connecticut.

resources. That is no longer the case. The hand lawn mower has become the stone ax of subdivision prehistory, and the exclusive treatment of a lawn with water enjoys approximately the same respect among knowledgeable lawn specialists as bleeding with leeches does among physicians.

Today's lawn, to be properly cared for, must be awakened in the spring with a chemical fertilizing solution containing nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. At the same time, crabgrass seedlings must be put to sleep with bensulide, oxadiazon, and DCPA. During the late spring and early summer, repeated applications of nitrogen in any one

of its common forms—urea, urea formaldehyde, or Milorganite—are mandatory. Exigent circumstances may dictate Diazanone, Olfatan, Ter-san, dicamba, and methanearsonates. Finally, as fall wanes, massive additional mineral applications guarantee a nutritious winter.

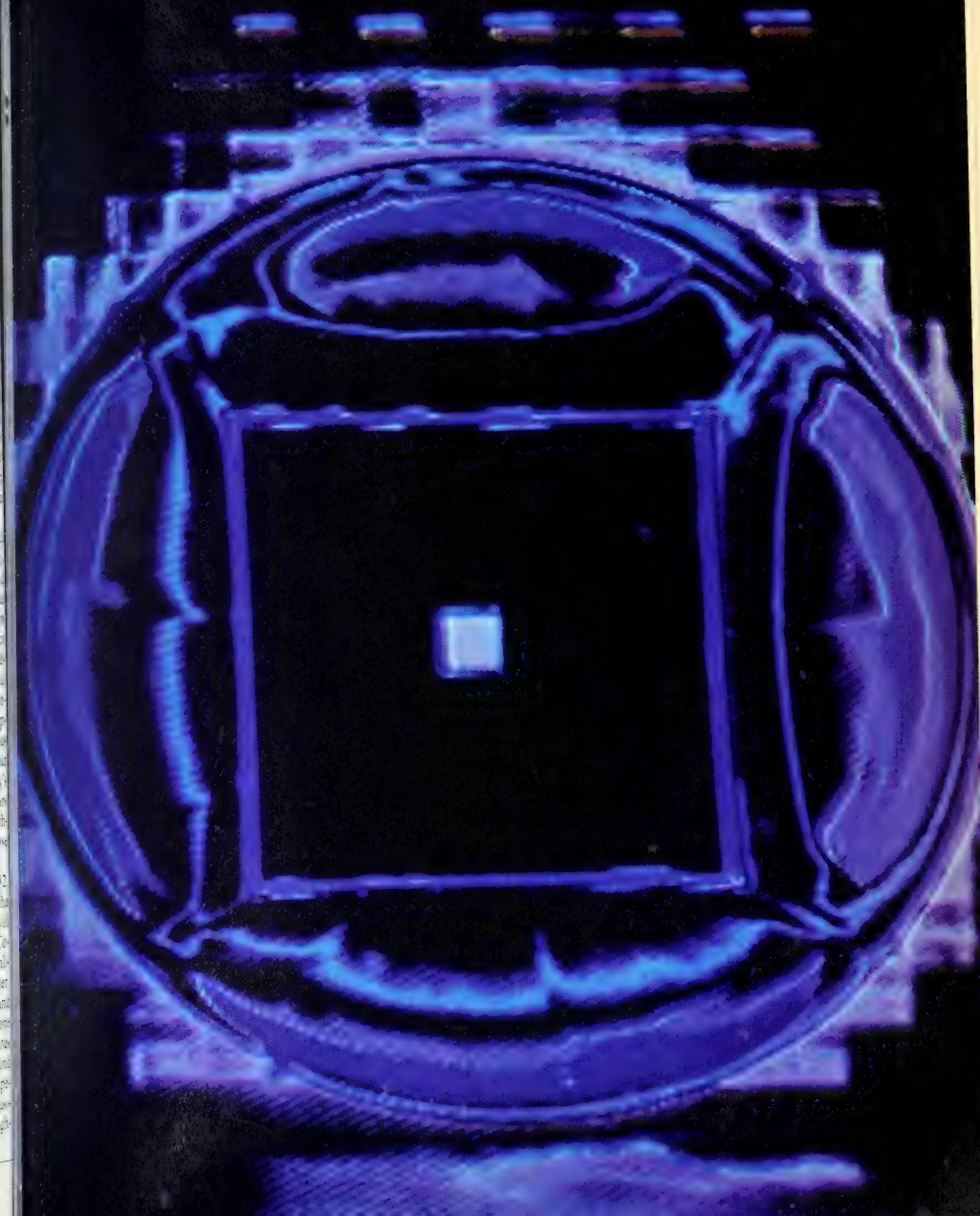
There can be no doubt. After a conspicuously unsophisticated past, lawn care now ranks with orthodontia as one of the foremost suburban sciences, and, as a result, lawn care has also become—pun neither intended nor avoidable—a leading growth industry.

After all, and no matter what you believe about acid rain, those chemicals just do not get on your lawn by themselves. Somebody else has to buy them. Somebody else has to mix them. Somebody else has to put them in the 1,200-gallon tank trucks that are now more common in suburbia than the milkman or marital infidelity. Frequently, that somebody else is the ChemLawn Corporation, "America's Leader in Professional Lawn Care."

ChemLawn started out as the Duke Garden Center in Troy, Ohio. Paul Duke and his son, Dick, sold fertilizers and weed killers over the counter to people who did not know how to apply the stuff and were not terribly interested in learning. Gradually, the Dukes of Troy moved out of the store and into the neighborhoods to help with the chemical applications. In 1969, ChemLawn was incorporated, and the next year marked the last time the company's sales were under a million dollars annually. From that 1970 benchmark of \$981,000, annual sales rose to a 1981 total of \$141,961,711.

During the summer of 1982, ChemLawn Corporate Center, the company's new headquarters, will open on forty acres of land in Columbus, Ohio. It will cost \$8.5 million. During the same summer, ChemLawn's fleet of white and green tank trucks may service one million lawns in the United States and Canada. Those households, and perhaps a million more, will experience the science and show business of lawn care in the age of high-tech horticulture.

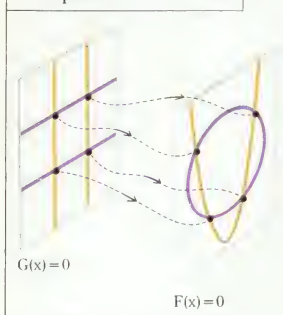
The Continuation Method



The Continuation Method

The need to solve systems of polynomial equations arises in pursuits ranging from geometric optics to chemical kinetics. A practical method of solution, developed at the General Motors Research Laboratories, provides designers of mechanical parts with a new capability.

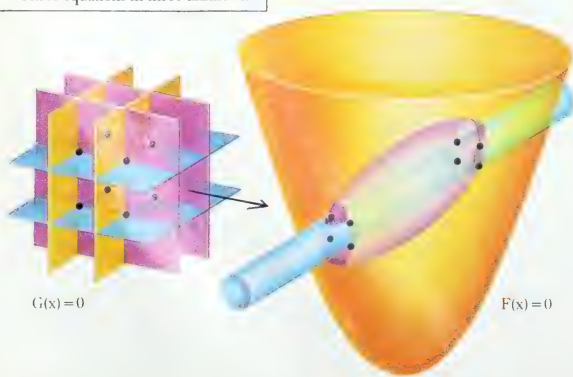
Two equations in two unknowns



The two pairs of parallel lines of $G(x)=0$ evolve into the parabola and ellipse of $F(x)=0$.

The three pairs of parallel planes of $G(x)=0$ evolve into the paraboloid, ellipsoid and cylinder of $F(x)=0$.

Three equations in three unknowns



CLASSICALLY difficult non-linear equations—those made up of polynomial expressions—can now be solved with reliability and speed. Recent advances in the mathematics of continuation methods at the General Motors Research Laboratories have practical implications for a wide range of scientific and engineering problems. The immediate application at General Motors is in mechanical design. The new method finds all eight solutions to three quadratic equations in a few tenths of a second—fast enough for computer-aided design on a moment-to-moment basis. Algorithms based on this method are critical to the functioning of GMSOLID, an interactive design system which models the geometric characteristics of

automotive parts.

Systems of non-linear equations have been solved for many years by "hit or miss" local methods. The method developed at General Motors by Dr. Alexander Morgan is distinguished by being *global* and *exhaustive*. Local methods depend on an initial estimate of the solution. They proceed by iterative modifications of the estimate to converge to a solution. However, success is not guaranteed, because there are generally no practical guidelines for making an initial choice that will ensure convergence. Reliability is further compromised when multiple solutions are sought.

Global methods, by contrast, do not require an initial estimate of the solution. The continuation method, as developed by Dr. Morgan, is not only global, but also exhaustive in that, assuming exact arithmetic, it guarantees convergence to all solutions. The convergence proof rests on principles from the area of mathematical differential topology.

Here is the way continuation works. Suppose we want to solve system $F(x)=0$. We begin by generating a simpler system $G(x)=0$, which we can both solve and continuously evolve into $F(x)=0$. It is important that we select a G properly, so the process will converge. Dr. Morgan has devised a method for selecting G which gives rapid convergence and reliable computational behavior. He first applied the theorem established by Garcia and

ingwill to select G . However, the resulting algorithm could not achieve the speed and computational reliability necessary for several applications. Next, he utilized some ideas from algebraic geometry—"homogenous coordinates" and "complex projective space"—to prove a new theorem for selecting G . The result of Dr. Morgan's efforts is a practical numerical method based on solid mathematical principles with innate reliability.

Reliability is the critical element for mathematical methods embedded in large computer programs, because errors may not become evident until after they have ruined a large data structure compiled at great expense and effort. Speed is also important to economical real-time implementation. This method has proved to be reliable and fast in solving problems involving equations up to the sixth degree in three or four variables. However, there are obvious practical limitations on the number of equations and their degree, due to the limited precision of computer arithmetic and computer resource availability.

THE FIGURES illustrate the transition from simple $G(x)=0$ to final $F(x)=0$. In both figures, the "simplicity" of $G(x)=0$ is reflected graphically in its linear structure—seen as lines and planes. The non-linearity of $F(x)=0$ is seen

in the curvature of the final shapes in each figure.

In figure 1, the four dots on the left plane represent the set of simultaneous solutions to the system of equations $G(x)=0$. The four dots on the right plane represent the set of simultaneous solutions to the system of equations $F(x)=0$. The dashed lines represent simultaneous solutions to intermediate systems whose graphs would show the evolution from one configuration to the other. With the addition of a third dimension in figure 2, the number of dots representing simultaneous solutions doubles. Representation of the transitional points, as in figure 1, would require a fourth dimension.

"Continuation methods, although well known to mathematicians," says Dr. Morgan, "are not widely used in science and engineering. Acoustics, kinematics and non-linear circuit design are just a few fields that could benefit immediately. I expect to see much greater use of this mathematical tool in the future."

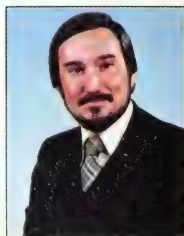
THE MAN BEHIND THE WORK

Dr. Alexander Morgan is a Senior Research Scientist in the Mathematics Department at the General Motors Research Laboratories.

Dr. Morgan received his graduate degrees from Yale University in the field of differential topology. His Ph.D. thesis concerned the geometry of differential manifolds. Prior to joining General Motors in 1978, he taught mathematics at the University of Miami in Florida and worked as an analyst at the Department of Energy's Savannah River Plant in South Carolina.

While serving in the U.S. Army, Dr. Morgan participated in the development and analysis of simulation models at the Strategy and Tactics Analysis Group in Bethesda, Maryland.

Dr. Morgan's current research interests include the qualitative theory of ordinary differential equations and the numerical solution of non-linear equations.



General Motors

The future of transportation is here

IN THE scientific world, lawn care is the domain of the agronomist, a specialist in the branch of agriculture dealing with field crop production and soil management. In part because of the need created by golf-, football-, and baseball-grounds keepers, agronomists have been kept busy during the last two decades developing faster-growing, denser, more rugged grass types. Together with fertilization and pest control—which covers weeds, fungi, and insects—grass growing has recently enjoyed a period of spectacular scientific advance. Simultaneously, the suburban passion for well-groomed lawns has continued to rage, yet the increasing number

of two-income households has set limits on the time available for lawn care while providing sufficient additional financial resources for the task. When technology met peer-group pressure, the lawn-care industry resulted.

Although ChemLawn is by far the largest and best known of the lawn-care companies, it does not have the market to itself. National and regional concerns, such as Lawn Doctor, Lawn-a-Mat, and Perf-a-Lawn, are also after a piece of it and each year a new crop of local competitors sprouts up like fine fescue. They share a fondness for amalgamated names, and they have a common approach to creating the perfect lawn—four to six chemical applications designed to weed, feed, and (pardon the expression) grub-proof your lawn. And they all want your business.

However, if you think that you can just call a lawn-care company one day and have a gaily painted tank truck at your yard spraying like a fire boat in New York Harbor the next, you've got another think coming. No lawn-care company will be rash enough to give you an estimate over the telephone or agree to care for a lawn sight unseen. Instead, a survey, for which there is no charge, must precede any offer of services. This survey will be comprehensive, serious, and sufficiently intimidating to convince you that, alone, you stand naked and helpless before the grave problems that afflict your lawn, and the many others that threaten.

The lawn-care operator making his first visit to a prospective customer has to deal with a syndrome poignantly expressed by the owner of a company located in the suburban Northeast: "The trouble is that people don't understand that grass is not just grass. If they only knew what we are up against." The first job, then, is to know what you are up against.

Before anything can be efficiently grown in it, the dirt that is, after all, your lawn must be subjected to a battery of tests and microscopic scrutiny. Toward that end, a technician arrives at your home, sober

of visage and dressed in the company's colors.

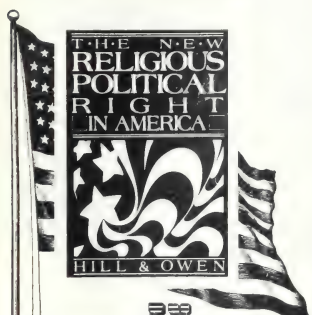
First, he estimates the percentage of each existing grass type in your lawn. Uniformity is the objective here, and the preferred strains are bluegrass and fine ryegrass. However, since mixed seeds are cheaper and it is possible for seed blown from neighboring lawns to germinate in your yard, uniformity is rarely attained. To meet the varying fertilization demands of the different grass types, it is essential to get some sense of a lawn's overall composition.

Your lawn technician next uses a metal probe to measure thatch, the layer of dead and living organic material (including grass) on top of the soil. If thatch depth exceeds three quarters of an inch, it will inhibit air and fertilizer penetration to the soil, and also provide a haven for insects and a breeding ground for lawn diseases. Since excessive thatch depth can change your lawn from a source of self-esteem to loathsome and humiliating pebble, the results of this probe are critical. It may even be necessary to undertake emergency de-thatching before anything further can be done.

Getting past the thatch test is, however, not the end of a homeowner's worries. The grisliest aspect of the on-site inspection remains, for, against a catalogue of horrible set forth with clinical dispassion of a form checklist, your lawn must be surveyed for the presence of weed diseases, and insect infestation.

While the untutored eye might identify a dandelion or two (the most common form of broadleaf weed), your lawn-care technician also checks for buckhorn, plantain, purslane, oxalis, and spurge, to mention only five out of fifteen or twenty possibilities. Of the grass-type weeds, crabgrass is of course the prime offender, but there is also risk of infestation by goosegrass, nutsedge, quackgrass, and the dreaded poa annua.

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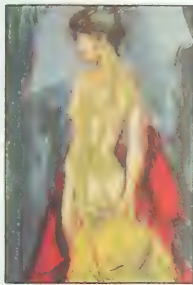
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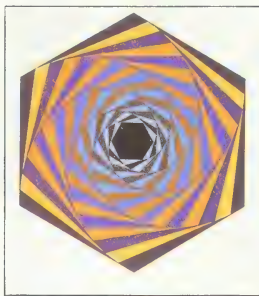
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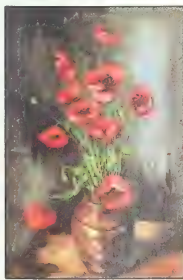
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harbor grubs, chinch bugs, bill bugs, or the vile sod webworm? Is it infected with leaf spot, fusarium, fairy ring, or stripe smut, the agronomic equivalent of herpes simplex? You hope and pray not, while preparing yourself for the worst.

At last, the technician takes a measuring wheel and walks off the boundaries of your property and the dimensions of your house and driveway, noting the measurements he will use to calculate what will become one of life's most vitally important numbers—that of your lawn area.



Chinch bug: the winged adult.

The amounts and concentration of fertilizer to be applied to your lawn depend on your lawn area. The same is true for the herbicides, fungicides, and insecticides. Your bill is calculated on the basis of lawn area. If you should die suddenly, the executor of your estate may want to know your lawn area.

Unfortunately, your lawn area is as hard to remember as a social security number. Therefore, when the technician has completed his calculations, it is prudent to write down your lawn area and keep it in a safe and convenient place.

With one last glance around to check for miscellaneous problems—"heavy traffic" (a path), "dog damage" (not chewing), etc.—the technician prepares to leave. The visual survey is complete and the real diagnostic work can now begin. He takes a sample of your lawn for analysis back at the lab.

GENERAL practitioners of medicine do not treat a sore throat without analyzing a throat culture. Orthopedic surgeons do not put a cast on an arm without an X ray. And lawn-care companies are not going to dump a load of urea in your yard without a soil test.

The first level of chemical soil analysis consists of a pH test. As any fool knows, pH is the negative logarithm of the effective hydrogen-ion concentration or hydrogen-ion activity in gram equivalents per liter. It is usually expressed in units of one tenth, on a scale of 0 to 14. All of this has to do with acidity. If a lawn is too acidic, nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus will not be "available," that is, capable of being absorbed through a plant's root system. Too alkaline, on the other hand, and soil can even be toxic to plant growth, a phenomenon fortunately confined mainly to the Painted Desert and nuclear test sites. The primary objective of residential lawn treatment, therefore, is to reduce acidity.

This, of course, leads one back to the pH test. On the 0-to-14 scale, seven represents neutrality and numbers higher and lower than seven indicate, respectively, alkalinity and acidity. Since the ideal lawn should be slightly acidic, the ideal pH reading is 6.5. If, after a pH meter is immersed in a solution made of your soil and water, the reading is any lower than 6.5, it will be necessary to add calcium oxide (CaO, or "lime") to your lawn before fertilizer will do it much good. All of this makes the pH test seem like the ultimate in good sense.

Meanwhile, in another test tube, the presence of various minerals in the soil is being detected. These include the macronutrients nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, as well as the micronutrients, such as iron, manganese, and zinc. A lyrical-sounding list, but essential for lawn growth. If they are missing from your soil, grass will be missing too. As a result, one function of a mineral series or soil profile is to determine which minerals must be supplemented.

Additionally, if a particular mineral is too strongly concentrated, disastrous consequences may ensue. For example, even too much nitrogen can be a bad thing. Modest overdoses contribute to rapid thatch growth, with all of its despicable consequences. Genuine excess will produce foliar burning, a form of lawn arson. In lawns, as in life, the golden mean is the golden rule.

At the completion of your soil profile, the company will pass on the lab results to the penultimate component in the lawn-care combine, the data processors. With today's technology, your lawn-care company can assure you that the natural growth and development of your lawn need never be impeded by human error.

Your lawn's size, grass types, mineral and pesticide needs are fed into the company's Apple, and an individual chemical-application program issues forth. If new problems arise during the course of the program, adjustments to meet them are only a data entry away. And, of course, variables such as air temperature and wind velocity are cranked in on the eve of each application to assure a proper adjustment of spray-gun apertures.

TO DATE, none of this work will have cost you anything. Now, however, with your range of problems identified and the solutions reduced to print-out form, it is time for a consultation with a fully licensed turf specialist. That can be expensive.

There was a time in our social history when an individual who cared for lawns might have been described as a gardener. Often a fairly recent arrival to our shores, he dressed appropriately to his trade in denim overalls, a flannel shirt, and a sweat-stained felt hat. Not so today's fully licensed turf specialist. He is immaculate.

The people who take soil samples from your yard handle the dirt. Your fully licensed turf specialist handles only the test results and the customers.

He is equipped for the former by

academic training in horticulture or an in-house course from his employer. And he is indeed fully licensed, since most states have a higher regard for the well-groomed lawn than for the well-healed appendectomy or the well-drawn contract. Unlike lesser functionaries, such as doctors and lawyers, lawn-care specialists must not only be licensed by the states in which they operate but must also renew their licenses periodically, either after a reexamination, or certified attendance, with a follow-up exam, in a continuing-education program.

In terms of convention department, therefore, the lawn-care specialist is likely to be the consummate professional. While lawyers at the American Bar Association's annual meeting in New Orleans may be free to engage in conduct only tangentially related to professional growth, the fully licensed turf-care specialist attending Connecticut's 1982 Professional Turf and Landscape Conference had to keep his eye on the ball.

The lawyer only risked having to explain to a spouse the telephone number drunkenly inscribed inside a matchbook cover. The turf-care specialist, on the other hand, knew for a certainty that there would be twenty multiple-choice questions to be explained to the commissioner of Connecticut's Department of Environmental Protection, such as:

Examples of slow-release nitrogen are (choose one):

- urea and ureaform
- urea and methylene ureas
- ureaform and IBDU
- ammonium nitrate and ureaform
- urea and sulfur-coated urea

The fully licensed turf specialist had to make every effort to keep his wits about him.

But success in the business is not just a question of brains. You have got to sell. In a rapidly expanding market, with the tantalizing prospect of large profits, the competition has become fierce. Beyond the science, salesmanship is as prevalent in the lawn-care industry as nutsedge is on a lawn without meth-

aneuronates. The range of techniques can be imposing.

With the benefit of voice coaching and sales training modeled on the Dale Carnegie method, your fully licensed turf specialist may achieve the gently modulated tones and sense of intimate concern usually found only among FM disc jockeys. He reels off your basic lawn data in a droning, yet somehow familiar and soothing, monotone. You remember an early morning's easy listening on the West Coast: "It's 62 degrees and cloudy at 5:33 in Los Angeles..." Relaxed, you are prepared for the problem. The voice drops. The clipboard is set aside. Your turf specialist looks first at you, then at your spouse, and says, "Chinch bugs."

The mature chinch bug is less than a quarter of an inch long, a fact that would be comforting if a chinch bug traveled alone, which it does not. After lying dormant during the winter, chinch bugs reproduce at a hectic clip with the

first robin of spring. Even during this country's shortest growing season, chinch bugs are capable of achieving three generations, all of them nourished by sucking the juices from grass plants.

Left to their own devices, teeming hordes of chinch bugs will consume every square inch of greenery on your property. Damage may be so extensive that you will have to reseed your lawn completely, or reestablish it, as your turf specialist would say. Fortunately, you are told, Oftanal, a powerful new insecticide, can be applied, for a modest extra charge, and the chinch bugs will be vanquished like Redcoats from the field at Saratoga.

Given problems of a lesser magnitude, your turf specialist's presentation will be carefree and steakhouse sprightly: "Hi, my name's Jim. I'll be your turf specialist this season. Today's special is preemergent crabgrass control."

This is not to suggest for a moment that crabgrass is a trivial prob-

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lem. Indeed, crabgrass is the best known of the lawn pests and will sprout up like a cockle to destroy your lawn's surface texture. Moreover, it has a pernicious quality not found even in the straightforwardly self-indulgent chinch bug. Because crabgrass is a grass type, it is virtually impossible to get rid of on a comprehensive basis once it has germinated. The herbicides that destroy the crabgrass will also destroy the grass plants around it.

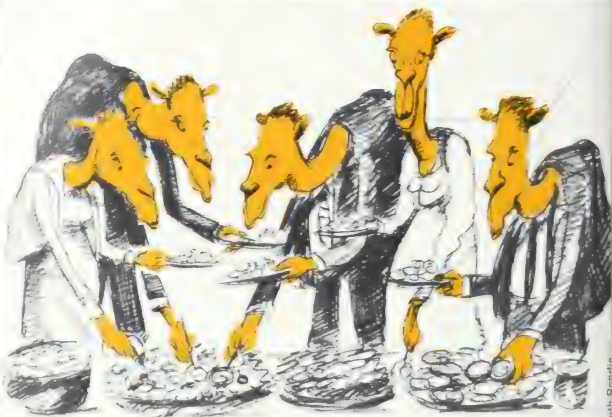
Nevertheless, crabgrass is treatable prior to germination, in its pre-emergent state. There are those who believe that scientists will someday discover the cure for postemergent crabgrass. Already, they point out, siduron has been found to be effective against crabgrass at the one-to-two-leaf stage of postemergence, yet harmless to surrounding grass plants. But in the mind of a realist, time is the essence of crabgrass control. Benfen, bensulide, or oxadiazon must be applied before the middle of May.

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THE FOURTH ESTATE



DIARY OF A FREELOADER

by Rhoda Koenig

Feeding the hand that bites you.

*The Llama is a woolly sort of
fleece hairy goat,
With an indolent expression and
an undulating throat
Like an unsuccessful literary
man.*

BECAUSE of these lines by Hilaire Belloc, I have long associated journalists with llamas. But after a week of press lunches, cocktail parties, and suppers, I've decided the more appropriate animal is the camel, who takes nourishment where and when he can and stores it in his hump, to be digested as the need arises.

On every weekday in New York City, uncountable numbers of journalists are gobbling and quaffing food and drink they have not paid for. These spreads occur at events

Rhoda Koenig is literary editor of New York magazine.

intended to promote people, products, and institutions of varying degrees of worth. Few journalists will admit to being influenced in what they write by the existence or quality of refreshments, yet the public relations people continue to provide so much food that a busy (or shameless) journalist never has to pay for his own meals. To prove this, I agreed to go for five days, beginning March 22, with no sustenance except for press freebies. Malnutrition was not a problem. My colleagues proved most helpful in sharing invitations, though an arctic critic lamented, "With what Reagan's done to the arts, you're lucky to get an apple." A society editor tendering an invitation to a discotheque party, asked brightly, "Are drugs food?"

At first I was nervous about pos-

ing as a fashion journalist, or political journalist, or whatever, but there was never any credentials check. I either went as someone's guest (or "represented" him) or simply called and said I was with *Harper's* and could I come. Everyone I called was quick and cheery about saying yes, certainly, no problem. As a trial run, I went with a financial friend to a luncheon called by Merrill Lynch to discuss zero-coupon bonds. The experience was a bit like a visit to an unfamiliar church, where you watch the others to see when they stand and sit. In this case, I watched the authentic business reporters to see when they took notes, and followed suit, only I was writing, "Quite nice broiled filet of sole," "Manhattan clam chowder good but not hot enough," and "Endive has been better days."

After a little of this, I found the cryptic bond discussion no longer intimidating, and even pleasant; here is something very soothing about munching free food to an obligato of a baritone voice intoning, "2 billion, 283 million dollars... 10 billion, 760 million dollars..." As we left, I remarked to my friend that the food was agreeable enough, but rather bland. Yes," he agreed, "it's standard corporate food. If you want *cuisine*, you have to go to Goldman Sachs."

Having seen how easy it was, Iunched a few extra holes in my elts and began my week of free-eading.

Monday, March 22

THE FIRST lunch of the week is given by the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, a conservative think tank known for its food. The topic "The Reagan Revolution: Rhetoric Is Not Enough." I am still a little worried about fitting in, but as soon as I step into the Harmonie Club's chinoiserie-patterned dining room, a nice-looking economist approaches me with a smile and says, "Do you come here often?" Economists, it seems, are like everyone else.

Cocktails are followed by a lunch

of smoked salmon (a bit thick, but not bad) with capers and minced onion, three baby lamb chops (slightly charred, with a revolting Jell-O-green mint sauce), overcooked but edible French beans, potato balls, a tomato stuffed with bread crumbs, some small, undistinguished cookies, and a bombe of indeterminate-flavor ice cream with whipped cream and cherries and nasty, synthetic-tasting apricot sauce. No wine.

As coffee is served, the discussion begins, and I ungratefully start wondering how soon I can leave. (I have prudently chosen a seat near the door.) I decide to wait until at



...serious cheeses...

least three of the five speakers have finished, but after the second one ends his speech, I see the man at my left picking up his briefcase. By the time the third panelist is through, several people are walking out, so I feel no guilt about joining them. Advice to the Manhattan Institute: follow the Merrill Lynch technique of talking *during* lunch if you want to keep the crowd. Back at the office, I ask everyone, "Did you know that the USDA budget has moved inversely with farm commodity prices since 1970?" Everyone enormously impressed.

Evening: off to the Four Seasons for a crowded and noisy cocktail

party celebrating the arrival of *Spring*, a magazine for healthy women published by Rodale Press (sample articles: "Rough and Tumble: Today's Action Apparel" and "Vitamin B-6: God's Gift to Women"). The hors d'oeuvres table, appropriately, has a huge assortment of crudites, including asparagus, endive, and sliced turnip, along with the usual carrot, radish, pepper, tomato, celery, cucumber, and broccoli—all of high quality and beautifully presented. Some of the vegetables have been arranged to form chrysanthemums and African daisies. There are two liquor bars, a wine bar, and some canapés passed around by waiters. These consist of breaded shrimps that taste like balsa wood, toast spread with an unidentifiable beige thing, and tiny pastries filled with an unidentifiable brown thing.

A fellow journalist points out Mr. Rodale, confiding, "He had me to lunch one time and gave me alfalfa sprouts, and they made me sick." Against the wall, a pianist is conscientiously playing "Spring Is Here," "Paris in the Spring," and "Spring Will Be a Little Late This Year." I sing softly with him as he goes into "It Might As Well Be Spring," but the line "I keep wishing I were somewhere else" recalls me to my mission, and I exit, thanking the young woman who presents me with a miniature flashlight in the shape of a fountain pen.

A few blocks north, the Alliance Française is opening an exhibition of drawings by Tim, the political cartoonist of *L'Express*. There, I find some French bread, blue cheese, and Beaujolais-Villages. Despite my art friend's despair, there are no apples in sight. Actually, they would have gone nicely with the rest.

Much tastier and more original nourishment awaits me at a party for Margaret Atwood, in honor of her new novel, *Bodily Harm*. Atwood's editor, Patricia Soliman, has provided various crudites and many serious cheeses, fried chicken, a lovely red-caviar mousse, and a chicken-liver mousse topped with artichokes and peppers. The crowd has nothing in common with Murray Kempton's fearful description of

publishing parties: "Scenes out of the Paris Commune, with gently nurtured women swooping and clawing like harpies over a bean pie." Gossip is of a high order; I learn that Halston, who lives further up the block, is in bad odor with the other residents for his slipshod methods of trash disposal. ("He puts his trash out in plastic bags—the Périgord-Park has plenty of garbage, but they put theirs out in cans. You walk past Halston's garbage, you can see little forms writhing in and out.") Leave feeling that the lark and the snail are in the right place. Never did meet Margaret Atwood, but assume she was there somewhere.

Then on to Studio 54. Their press agent has put me down for an event whose purpose I did not quite catch. Unfortunately, there is no food and a cash bar. I wander around for a bit in the green and violet light, as the rock music rumbles and throbs, and scrutinize the young fun-seekers, among them a girl in a transparent sequined bolero and shoes with triangular heels, and a girl in imitation leopardskin, with eye makeup to her hairline. One boy wears a satin jacket with the words BROCCOLI RABS emblazoned on the back. Is this a sports club? A rock group? Interesting, but hunger and my mission propel me to the evening's fourth freebie—a party given by *After Dark* magazine to mark the revival of the musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

The venue of this orgy is a restaurant called Once Upon a Stove, a welter of Edwardian painting, ruching, lace, and frosted glass, through which I discern a bar and a buffet table laden with the first substantial food of the evening: sesame-coated chicken breasts (the sesame seeds, unfortunately, not toasted), tortellini salad (it was a great day for caterers when fashionable people decided they liked their pasta cold), carrot and zucchini batons, and tomato-and-cucumber salad. It all makes a pleasant meal, and I peg away at the lightly cooked and well-seasoned vegetables while looking around at

the other guests. Most appear friendly and well dressed in a not particularly startling fashion. But there is one person of indeterminate sex in a pompadour haircut and flamenco-ruffled jumpsuit, and three boys are necking on a banquette. I regard them with the austerity appropriate to a person who has never heard of "Broccoli Rabs," and head for home.

Tuesday, March 23

I HAVE high hopes for a lunch given by American Express today. ("The PR guy said, 'Don't eat any breakfast,'" my friend Jack tells me encouragingly as we taxi down to the financial district.) American Express also has better planning than the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research. Its press conference, to announce the sale of its headquarters building and a move to a new one nearby, is held *before* the meal. After a few brisk speeches, some questions, and photographs, the buffet table is open for business. Wow! American Express hasn't been hanging around restaurants all these years for nothing. For openers, an efficient waitress circulates with a tray of exquisite cheese puffs that dissolve instantly in the mouth in a shower of cheese happiness. Behind the table, some men are shelling clams and enormous oysters, which they place on a bed of crushed ice, while other nice men are carving a delicate pink ham and a moist and tender roast beef, the latter served on warm French bread saturated with rosemary butter. There are also platters of wild rice, shrimp, broccoli, mushroom, and cauliflower salad, and chicken and tuna salad, as like the coffee-shop stuff as Lutèce is like a coffee shop. Then a selection of cheeses, including a particularly tasty St. André. The lineup ends with a pyramid of butterballs, which I regard as a silent warning, and pass up, along with the biscuits and pumpernickel rolls. I cannot resist, however, the man with the tray of Florentines, and certainly not the man with the chocolate-covered strawberries. An aperitif, some wine from the well-stocked

bar, and a cup of coffee complete this excellent lunch, which is well received by the reporters ("Look, they've got scallions in this salad—I'm going to remember that"; "Will you watch my plate to make sure nobody takes anything?"). The model of the proposed fifty-one-story tower is being received less enthusiastically. "My God," says one man, shaking his head, "I hope it won't really look like that."

Evening: immediately upon arriving at Gucci, I realize I have made a mistake. I am going to be trapped into watching a show of spring fashions, and will have to stand up—all the folding chairs being occupied by a horde of ferociously fashionable creatures (lots of hibiscus-colored silk, metallic-leather appliques, blonde-streaked hair coiffed and rolled and pouffed). The half-hour parade of timid-rich striped blouses, sofa-chintz-flowered dresses, and plaid shirtwaists leaves me unmoved, but the lady announcing the costumes is somewhat amusing. Fashion commentary seems to be a mixture of cajolery and threat, rather like a nanny instructing a slightly backward child. "When you think of Gucci, you *must* think of leather." And, "I'd like you to take particular notice of the green crocodile bag." Nanny's benevolence is occasionally betrayed by off-mike hisses to the sound men to "Speed it up!" When the show is over, hysterical with relief, she shrilly urges everyone to "Stick around for the food!"

I stick for the Piper-Heidsieck champagne and tissue-thin caviar-and-cream-cheese sandwiches on soft white bread, but decide to cut my losses and rush to the next event. On the way out, I am presented with a shopping bag containing a paperback book with color reproductions of the mostly hideous paintings in the Gucci Galleria, two perfume samples, whose retail value I calculate from the press release to be \$14, and two black leather rectangles sewn together along two sides and stamped with the Gucci name. In the office next day, everyone examines it with interest, but no one can figure out what it is.

Conveniently just a block away

is the Doubleday bookshop, where a party is being held for the tenth anniversary of Foxfire Books. The Doubleday Suite, two rooms of built-in bookcases and comfortable flowered upholstery, has a relaxing, unfashionable air, like an upscale version of "Father Knows Best." As I walk in, a waitress comes up to ask what I'd like to drink and fetches it promptly. Other waitresses soon manifest themselves with trays of reassuring, old-fashioned hors d'oeuvres: hard-boiled egg halves filled with yurried yolks and the largest and weetest shrimp of the week, accompanied by a tangy but light sauce. Other nibbles are the kind best left out of fashion; a tray of carrot and celery and pepper sticks with no lip, a bowl of nuts, and (it must be part of the period setting) a bowl of cellophane-wrapped hard candies.

"Oh, you've missed the festivities," says a girl reproachfully as I join the "Celebrate Brooklyn" party in the boardroom of Manufacturers Hanover Trust (in Manhattan). I have not missed what I came for, though—a large and well-supplied bar and a selection of food that, though barely qualifying as mediocre, is certainly abundant: meatballs, fried chicken, breaded shrimp (inedible), naked shrimp (all right), pizza, and, best of all, large finger sandwiches well stuffed with tuna, egg salad, turkey, and ham and cheese. I am grateful for the first substantial nosh of the evening, but can't help thinking—isn't this stuff awfully tacky for the Park Avenue headquarters of a major bank? Perhaps this array of coarse, retrograde food bespeaks a banker's puritanism about the sensual side of life, but I worry if all of Manny Hanny's understanding about the outside world has dated. Make a mental note to find out if Chemical Bank has heard of tortellini.

Wednesday, March 24

TWO LUNCHES on the calendar today. Which should I choose? One is given by Habitation Leclerc, a Haitian resort, at a restaurant called Panna, where I have eaten rich

and scrumptious food. The other is at that hideous tourist trap, Tavern on the Green, and is given by Columbia Pictures for, hmmm, Sean Connery. It is true that my eye is supposed to be on the calories, but there are times when a girl has to opt for spiritual values.

I enter the kitsch-filled barn of Tavern on the Green, rolling along, singing a song, and suddenly halt in mid-chorus. Is that Sean Connery? Oh, dear, why do we forget that actors have access to such things as makeup and toupees? For so long an Ian Fleming hero, Sean Connery now looks like a character from



...Henry again...

Agatha Christie. I console myself with the brilliantly fresh crudités with a sour-cream-and-cheese dip, snow peas and cream cheese made into tiny lilies of the valley, strongly flavored pâté on toast, and cucumber slices topped with salmon mousse or tiny slices of smoked salmon.

Further consolation is available at table—a highly satisfying meal that begins with smoked trout and salmon with black olives, pumpernickel, sliced onion, and horseradish cream; goes on to a huge filet mignon with béarnaise sauce, a tomato stuffed with broccoli purée, and scalloped potatoes, and ends with a

lemon filled with lemon sherbet. Waiters are efficient and generous with Chablis for the first course and St.-Emilion for the second.

Back at the office, my friend Ruth, who had warned me off the lunch for the Haitian resort, saying it would be full of travel agents, then went herself, reports that I missed "the best veal chop I ever had in my whole life, and *pommes dauphines*, and a whole tray of every kind of chocolate dessert you could think of."

For some reason, the German Information Center occasionally asks me to receptions. Do they send invitations to every German-surnamed editor? I have never accepted before, but tonight, in the line of duty, I turn up at Goethe House to welcome Ambassador Peter Hermes. Nobody official welcomes me or tries to steer me toward the ambassador, which gives me a chance to browse among the impressive *Vor-speisen* on display. A lovely basket of crudités includes ruby lettuce, broccoli florets, and cooked artichokes, and there is guacamole, acres of cheese with rye and pumpernickel, and a few ducks cunningly made of apple slices. Several waiters slip in and out with trays of hot things (served hotter, I note appreciatively, than anyone else's): roast beef on rye spread with sharp German mustard, shish kebab, and tiny, perfect toasted ham-and-cheese sandwiches. The usual bar stuff, plus good German wine and beer. I amble from the attractive paneled room and pass a waiter coming in with carefully prepared caviar-and-cream-cheese canapés. Yes, I think, in future I shall take the German Information Center's invitations much more seriously.

A few blocks down Fifth Avenue, the French Embassy is fêteing Bertrand Tavernier and Nathalie Baye, director and star of the movie *A Week's Vacation*. If German ambassadorial food is so stunning, I think, imagine what the French will offer! Alas, everything matches the chilly formality of the white marble halls—tasteless little baguettes filled with blue cheese, glacial cream-cheese tartlets with a few grains of

red or black caviar on top, ratatouille in pastry shells (both practically raw), crudités (which *should* be cold) forced into a ridiculous pineapple shape and drying out. The ham-and-pimento-cheese spirals on toast aren't bad, nor is the one hot hors d'oeuvre (sausage *en croûte*). But, all in all, I am disappointed in this lack of sensuality from the nation that gave the world Simone Signoret and mayonnaise.

What sort of food do the heavy hitters eat? I hoped to get a clue at Happy Rockefeller's publication party for Henry Kissinger, held at her Fifth Avenue apartment. A swell crowd, which includes Abe Rosenthal, the William F. Buckley, Art Buchwald, Theodore H. White, and Malcolm Forbes, pays scant attention to the refreshments set out in Mrs. Rockefeller's dining room, decorated with Mondrian-style murals and ceiling. Too bad, for the offerings include squares of pumpernickel topped with thinly spread cream cheese and smoked salmon and a heated dish of chicken chunks, red pepper, and onion threaded on toothpicks. On the minus side, however, are cherry tomatoes filled with library-paste cream cheese and topped with prissy-looking olive slices, horrible cheese puffs that expel something very like Velveeta, and awful finger sandwiches—unidentifiably thin fillings between slices of dry, nondescript bread. Still, it's rather exciting to be wedged into a room filled with a quarter of a million dollars' worth of black velvet, moiré, tafeta, and mink-trimmed brocade; and I don't expect I shall soon be using another toilet with a Picasso over it.

I'd felt a bit low on my way to the Rockefeller party, but now, on to the day's fifth event, I seem to be reviving. Is this a second wind, or am I just hyperventilating? Anyway, I am curious to see whether Columbia Pictures' spread of the evening can top its performance of the afternoon. The invitation is to a screening—followed by a reception at the Greenery restaurant—of *Wrong Is Right*, the Sean Connery movie, which, as I gathered at lunch, is a zany farce about a pres-

ident of the United States. I therefore skip the screening and head straight for the buffet supper: ham, roast beef, watercress, tomato, mushroom, and endive salad, black caviar on toast with minced egg and onion (only one little slice, pity), tortellini in cream, scallops and shrimp in mayonnaise, potato salad with garlic sausage, fried zucchini, fruit salad, and cheeses. There are very few seats, so most of us civilians must eat standing up or with our plates balanced on the edge of the bar. Still, the food is all of excellent quality and beautifully prepared. I hover near Sean Connery, hoping to pick up some conversational tidbits, but all I manage to overhear (it is very noisy) is "I'm going to get something to eat. Will you be in the office tomorrow?" Not exactly the sort of thing I can work into a sampler.

Thursday, March 25

WITH THE BEST will in the world, I cannot get up for a breakfast at an advertising and public relations agency rechristened Ketchum Communications (formerly Ketchum MacLeod & Grove). Aside from the altered breathing, there is a rather fuzzy feeling in my head and a churning in my stomach. I am also beginning to appreciate the sad saying about reporters, "The legs are the first to go." So I am surprised and pleased, at 10:45, when a basket arrives at my office from Ketchum Communications, containing two splits of Henkell champagne, a brioche, a croissant, some strawberry jam, and a single rose. "Do you think I could get them all to do this?" I ask Jack as we share the brioche. "I can't understand why they didn't give me some butter."

"Rhoda," he says, "you're getting spoiled."

For lunch, it's back to Studio 54, where Milton Bradley is holding a "gala luncheon celebration" for something called the U.S. Simon Championship. The invitation reads "Noon to 3:00," which seems excessive, but a subsequent press release helpfully says, "Luncheon will

be served following the competition and entertainment." I therefore time my arrival for one o'clock, but even so I have to watch ten contestants intently and endlessly punching buttons on an electronic game. The bar remains open throughout, but the buffet tables are bare.

At about 1:45 the assembled hacks get restless, and many begin to drift away. By 2:00 there is an angry, murmuring knot of journalists confronting the hapless waiters. "I'd like to accommodate you ladies," one of them is saying as I walk up, "but they told us not to start serving until the game is over." "Well, everybody's gettin' polluted!" exclaims one lady reporter. "They're losing a lot of people this way." Another, tougher-looking one agrees: "They're getting everybody angry with this stupid stunt. Nobody's gonna write anything." By 2:20, although the game is not over, the mutiny level has risen so alarmingly that the waiters are told to hustle into the kitchen. The dozen or so reporters at the table quickly form themselves into a line and bear off plates of fried chicken with Cumberland sauce, moussaka, asparagus vinaigrette, lettuce, and—"tortellini salad again." I remark to the waiter. "Yeah," he says, "they like it because it's cheap." The moussaka topping is soggy, and the so-called Cumberland sauce is more like thin currant jelly, but the chicken and asparagus are fine. There doesn't seem to be anything you can do to hurt tortellini salad.

Evening: to the opulent Helmsley Palace Hotel for a fashion show to introduce a line of "bulletproof outerwear." My friend Alice comes along to lend a stomach. When we get there, pretty models of both sexes are wandering around tables of reporters who seem to be spending more time than is strictly necessary feeling the linings of their bulletproof jackets. This is not as entertaining as we had hoped (no demonstration of bulletproofing in action) and, worse, the bar is closed during the show. When the fashion parade stops, we maneuver to the hors d'oeuvres table, where we sample some canapés that are absolute-

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ly foul—what I assume from the color are tuna-cheese puffs but from the taste could be anything left over for a week, some scraps of toast topped with the cheapest and nastiest sort of canned pâté, and some others topped with a mystifying “cocktail spread.” “There are some rumaki down at that end,” reports Alice, “but you *don't* want to go there.”

A much classier act awaits us at the Metropolitan Museum. There Little, Brown is giving Henry Kissinger its publication party in the Temple of Dendur, or the Disco of Dendur, as a stylish friend calls this popular party site. The crowd is rather small for the room, and low-voltage. “No one famous is here,” says an editor, sighing, “unless they’re so famous I don’t recognize them.” But the hors d’oeuvres are top-flight. “Marinated scallops in cucumber,” a waiter with a lacquered tray full of them considerably announces. Other waiters offer trays of soft, dainty watercress sandwiches, ham sandwiches, cheese straws, tartlets filled with warm curried chicken, and dilled smoked salmon on pumpernickel. Everything is exquisitely fresh and light, including the pretty crudités (endive, white turnip) with green mayonnaise.

We finish off the night at the Red Parrot, a vast disco near the Hudson River. Here *People* magazine is celebrating “the night of the first new moon of Spring” with “our special friends in advertising agency media departments,” and promises that “the tempting buffet tables will be ongoing through the evening.” We plunge into a block-long airplane hangar filled with several thousand squirming media people enthusiastically listening to the Mamas and the Papas. The sound almost knocks us off our feet, but a waiter with a tray of new potatoes drenched in caviar and sour cream urges us on. On the next block we find the tempting buffet tables, loaded with some good food (Waldorf chicken salad, smoked turkey, ham with herbed mustard, roast beef with béarnaise sauce) and a lot of mediocre stuff: country pâté, liver pâté, spinach pâté, cauliflower salad, salade ni-

çoise, tomato salad, *macaroni* salad (haven’t they heard?), spinach pie, cheese, and fruit. The room is so dark I have to ask what everything is, and am glad I do. “Marinated raw meat” is how a waiter describes some unpleasant-looking canapés. The darkness makes the Red Parrot a rather dangerous place to eat (people are constantly tripping on the step where I sit), and the wall-shaking din makes for rather disagreeable dinner music. Alice and I wash it all down with some vodka and gin and totter on home. The next morning she calls.

“Did you eat that liver pâté?”

“No.”

“Well, that’s why you weren’t throwing up all night.”



...ah, bread and milk...

Friday, March 26

TODAY'S LUNCH is an undemanding one, thank God: a forum on “problems of higher education,” at the City University Graduate Center, sponsored by the City Club of New York. When I get there, the tepid green-cellophane salad is already on the table. No wine is. My neighbors are deep in a discussion on problems of the household exterminator. “The difference between a termite

and an ant is, an ant has a waist and it has antennae that go out *this* way.” Not the most delightful background music for lunch, particularly for an inadequately heated freezer seafood casserole in gluey orange sauce, rice, and summer squash, which I hear another neighbor describe as “very tasty and delightful.” I envy one so easily pleased. As the discussion begins, we are brought coffee and a slice of crumb-topped apple pie that looks as if it has crawled here to die. I am in a bad mood since I have discovered a hair in my seafood, and especially since I notice a few people, obviously familiar with these lunches, have ordered chef’s salad or cottage cheese and fruit. The president of Fordham tells a heartwarming story of a South Bronx boy who is now at Harvard Medical School.

This evening, six thousand people show up at Radio City Music Hall for the premiere of “Encore: 50 Golden Years of Showstoppers.” A friend had passed on her press invitation with a conspiratorial note reading, “I think there’s some food in this,” but all I can find in the lobby is a bar dispensing Taylor champagne and another offering Sprite and Coca-Cola. I sit through 100 leaden minutes of “The Glory of Easter” and a lot of pointless running, jumping, and high-kicking to the accompaniment of “Rhapsody in Blue,” “Bolero,” and other numbers from which the choreographer has leached all dignity and excitement. I do not often go to the ballet, but I cannot think it good form for a dancer to spread-eagle a ballerina over his head and gaze into her crotch.

I decide that the overpowering Art Deco lobby is more fun than the show, and skip the finale for the pleasure of wandering around this vast empty space. I investigate every corner, and nowhere do I find a speck of cheese, a particle of smoked salmon, or a single tortellino. Thank you, Radio City, I think silently but heartily, and hail a taxi. There is a wonderful bowl of bread and milk waiting for me at home, and all the Alka-Seltzer I can drink. □



YOU CAN GET IT IF YOU REALLY WANT

by James Traub

If racism is such a crushing burden on blacks, why have the West Indians done so well?

THE New York City Planning Department has committed the city's economic life to a series of intricate maps, one of which indicates, with progressively darkening colors, the distribution of public assistance. The all-white neighborhoods of southern Queens are all-white on the map—almost no one there receives income support—but next door, the all-black neighborhoods along the northern tier of Brooklyn are colored in hectic tones of purple; 40 percent or more of the residents are on some form of welfare. In southern Brooklyn both the residents and the map turn white once again. Yet a broad swath of central Brooklyn appears on the map as white or a light pink, despite the fact that most of its neighborhoods are black. The people there don't think of themselves primarily as black, however; they think of themselves as West Indian. The majority of America's half million or more West Indians

James Traub is a freelance writer living in New York.

have probably settled here in Brooklyn, in tidy, tight-knit neighborhoods once dominated by the Jews or Italians, who have left for Long Island. The West Indians are black, but prosperous; and thereby hangs a question: what accounts for their anomalous success?

At the northwestern edge of Brooklyn lies that part of Rutland Road adjacent to Brownsville. Here Rutland Road is roughly 75 percent West Indian; Brownsville is almost all native American black. In Brownsville, homes and stores lie abandoned, drug addicts and winos are easy to spot, crime is a part of daily life. The residents of Rutland Road speak of Brownsville as if it were some kind of plague. Rutland Road is no model of a community either: the stores have a distinctly drab and underpatronized look to them. Yet it is a community of homeowners, shopkeepers, blue-collar workers. Two hospitals in the area provide a base of employment. And on either side of the commercial street are rows and rows of well-kept

two-family homes, with fenced-in gardens, looking out over immaculate streets. Everywhere signs advertise block associations, neighborhood patrols. When a house comes up for sale, people try to reserve it for a friend or relative. "And the odd thing about it," says Karl Sparber of the Brooklyn Planning Department, "is that when the neighborhood completely turned over ten or fifteen years ago, it didn't fall apart." Elsewhere in Brooklyn, and elsewhere in America's big cities, the iron law of white flight and subsequent decay can be seen working itself out; but not in West Indian districts.

ACCORDING to the most recently available figures, blacks from the Caribbean earn 94 percent of the average American family income, while American blacks earn only 57 percent and are actually losing ground. This gap first became visible fifty years ago, when West Indians began to establish themselves here in large numbers. In 1939, the great black sociologist Ira de Augustine Reid wrote *The Negro Immigrant*, in part to examine the reasons for their greater success. Reid estimated that as many as one third of black professionals were foreign-born, primarily Caribbean, though immigrants constituted no more than 10 percent of the black population; West Indians were underrepresented in prisons and overrepresented in colleges. Reid ascribed these results to superior education and skills brought from the islands, and also to a more proud and stubborn nature born of a less brutal history. West Indians, he wrote, "express more extreme resentment to any manifestation of discourtesy than the native-born Negro is wont to do."

In recent years, the subject of West Indian success has been confined to scholarly journals, save for brief appearances in popular works like *Beyond the Melting Pot*, by Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Nathan Glazer. No inferences can be drawn from the West Indian expe-

rience that cannot be somehow construed as racist, so none has been drawn. The belief that black economic failure has to do solely with the behavior of whites—with the consequences of racism—has made Reid's line of speculation unthinkable. Now, however, someone has come along to think the unthinkable.

Black economist Thomas Sowell is the Herman Kahn of race relations. A pupil of Chicago economist and television personality Milton Friedman's, Sowell, along with such people as George Gilder, Paul Craig Roberts, and Arthur Laffer, has provided a basis of theoretical as well as practical support for the Reagan administration's effort to remove the government from the lives of the poor. Sowell's line of work takes in economics, social theory, and ethnic history, all of which he has fused into an argument, propounded in a torrent of books, that blacks, and the poor generally, would be better off if left alone to play the free market. The argument, as stated in *Race and Economics*, runs as follows: "job quotas, charities, subsidies, preferential treatment tend to undermine self-reliance and pride of achievement in the long run. If the history of American ethnic groups shows anything, it is how large a role has been played by attitudes, and particularly attitudes of self-reliance."

West Indians represent, of course, one of those ethnic groups, and the only one that is black. If discrimination alone accounts for black economic failure, what accounts for their success? Sowell, as is his wont, delivers the news in rubber gloves: "The West Indian success pattern," he writes in *Essays and Data on American Ethnic Groups*, "undermines the explanatory power of current white discrimination as a [not even *the*] cause of current black poverty." The operative word is "current." Sowell contends that the consequences of *past* discrimination—the lack not only of education and skills, but of crucial values and attitudes—rather than contemporary racism, restrain the entry of blacks into the middle class. West

Indians had a luckier history. "Out of West Indian slavery," he writes in *Race and Economics*, "emerged a more self-reliant, independent and defiant population than emerged out of U.S. slavery." Just as Ira Reid said.

SPEND a week in the West Indian communities of East Flatbush, Erasmus, Crown Heights, and Rutland Road, and you'll discover Thomas Sowell's natural constituency. Here the value of lonely economic struggle and the awful perils of welfare enjoy the status of proverbial wisdom. Rep. Shirley Chisholm, child of Barbadians, recalls that in her constituency of Bedford-Stuyvesant the only staunch opponents of the Great Society programs were West Indians, who complained bitterly of people getting a free ride. Some of them—especially women, it seems—grow almost apoplectic on the subject.

Aston and Gloria Morgan run a record and TV-repair store on Rutland Road; from their meager profits they put three children through college. Mrs. Morgan loses her calm when talk turns to welfare. "What's ruining this country," she shouts, stalking across the shop, "is the social services and welfare! If you can lay around from morning to night, do nothing, and then get paid, why should you work?" Mrs. Morgan grew up with a very different imperative. "Whatever you want you've gotta sweat for it!" So saying, with the back of her hand she rubs imaginary sweat from her brow.

The relatively low use of welfare among West Indians does not so much prove their prosperity as their resistance to any inroads into their self-reliance, although this attitude may be changing among younger West Indians. Hazel Smith, a nurse and community organizer in the Rutland Road area, despairs of encouraging business expansion, since shopkeepers are so reluctant to take on loans—to make themselves "beholden." But if pride or stubbornness keeps West Indian commerce modest—Brooklyn has endless Caribbean shops, but very few sizable

Caribbean businesses—it also encourages independence. Smith supervised the distribution of the surplus federal cheese in Rutland Road. Of the 400 or so takers, almost none wrote down local addresses; most came from Brownsville or New Lots (another native black area).

West Indians get ahead, or at least keep their heads above water, in much the same way that other immigrant groups have. They work fanatically hard, save money, and get an education, if not for themselves, then for their children. It is hard for middle-class Americans, for whom the comfy, if troubled, corporate economy fills the horizon, to realize that a vast realm remains in which minimum wage laws, maximum work-week standards, even planned leisure, have little weight. Many West Indians have work histories that curdle the blood.

Gloria Miller spent the better part of five years working sixteen hours a day to save money for a house, as well as for the education of herself and her children. She had moved from Jamaica to London and back to Jamaica by 1966, when an old friend visited from the United States with tales of opportunity. In 1968 she came to New York and stayed with her friend in order to save money. She worked as a nurse and took classes at the same time, until she received a degree as a registered nurse. She immediately took a job at a second hospital and embarked on a killing schedule that had her dashing between stints, falling asleep on the subway, and, finally, collapsing from exhaustion in the operating room. She recalls her tribulations with a stubborn pride. Her marriage had broken up in England, and she had two children to take care of; but "I never received a penny in child support after I came here," she points out. In 1973 she bought a house and a car—she remembers the date and the price. Recently she became supervisor of nurses at King's County Hospital, and, in what must seem like her endless spare time—though she also takes private patients—she has begun to get involved in community work.

Miss Miller arrived with a skill, as do a great many other West Indians, and critics of Sowell have pointed out that West Indians may get ahead because they start out ahead. The fact is, however, that the wave of Caribbean immigrants over the last twenty-five years has been largely unskilled, as compared with those who came in the earlier part of the century. Most of the hundreds of roti shops (roti is a Caribbean sandwich), grocery stores, hardware stores, and dry cleaners that line the commercial streets of central Brooklyn were started by immigrant entrepreneurs who arrived with little money and no technical skills.

Certainly the most amazing vindication of immigrant values in the absence of skills is the tenuous success of the Haitians. Not all the Haitians in Brooklyn are illegal immigrants or boat people, but few of them speak English, many are illiterate even in French, and all are black. Like West Indians generally, Haitians have constructed an insular, small-scale economy that depends very little on the cooperation of the outside world for success. Haitians have brought with them from Port-au-Prince their own occupations—changing tires and cruising up and down the streets picking up people who are sick of waiting for the bus. Observers of the Haitians who lay down roots in Brooklyn are amazed, and almost appalled, by their capacity for sacrifice and their fierce determination. "I actually think these people are going to make it," says Rene Williams, director of the Erasmus Neighborhood Federation, which ministers to the southern portion of the Caribbean community. Miss Williams has watched entire Haitian families move into efficiency apartments, find work, and finance a home. She likes to talk about someone she met in a day-care center, a woman who had to look for work in order to retain her qualification for welfare. The woman spoke little English, but she began taking part-time domestic work, and finally found a full-time domestic job. (All but a few of the domestics in ritzy Brooklyn Heights

are West Indian.) Miss Williams then suggested to her, more or less whimsically, that she try to find a home in an upcoming municipal auction of residential properties. The day after the auction the woman returned waving a property deed in her hand. She and her husband and friends restored the building, and rented out a storefront and an apartment. With the proceeds her

husband bought a van, and now he works transporting children for a nearby private school.



HOUSE—a place of one's own—is a totem of sorts among West Indians. Readers of V. S. Naipaul's novel *A House for Mr. Biswas* are familiar with the West Indian obses-

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sion with owning one's own property. "There are two things every West Indian wants to get when he arrives here," says Shirley Chisholm, "an education and a house." The newly arrived West Indians migrate steadily southward in Brooklyn, into homeownership neighborhoods. Indeed, one of the obvious differences between Rutland Road and Brownsville is that in the former people are making their own beds; in the latter, someone else's. The householder is a stakeholder; he is like a small farmer rather than a tenant farmer.

West Indians place an emphasis on the strong family that is archetypal among immigrant groups. Practically everyone, of course, believes in the traditional family structure, but the idea that family disintegration, especially among blacks, is a prime cause of the phenomenon of the "underclass" has become a controversy. This subject, too, has an honorable pedigree in black scholarship. Sociologist E. Franklin Fra-

zier wrote *The Negro Family* in 1939, but its observations remain fresh today. Yet when Daniel Patrick Moynihan recycled and updated Frazier's research in a 1965 Labor Department memo, "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action," he gained a reputation for sophisticated white racism. But now Shirley Chisholm speaks of "the social pathology of the black family" (almost an inadvertent quote from Moynihan) as the prime cause of the persistence of poverty; Eleanor Holmes Norton, former director of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, has begun to say much the same thing. Certain aspects of the unspeakable are becoming speakable, if only when blacks are saying it to blacks.

West Indians universally speak of the importance of a strong family—even those who, like Gloria Miller, have had to make do without a father for their children. Gerterlyn Dozier, a second-generation Barbadian who teaches black studies at

Baruch College in Manhattan, professes some amazement that her own children are "fierce West Indians," but then she reflects on how thoroughly her own father instilled in her traditional values. Shirley Chisholm recalls the respect and fear of authority in which she was drilled; her mother forced her to come home from dancing parties when the other kids were just arriving. The family, of course, ramifies into the extended family, and, further, into the community itself; almost all immigrant communities seem to function as an informal welfare system. New York's West Indian districts sport a bewildering welter of benevolent societies, most of them nationalistic: the Grenadian Ex-Policeman's Society, the Jamaica Progressive League, and so forth.

Latter-day West Indians have gained a reputation among blacks as Uncle Toms, but this is not quite fair. Most West Indians do seem to feel that racism does not constitute an insuperable obstacle to their success, and they tend to deal with it in undramatic fashion. Francis Redhead, for example, formerly Grenada's ambassador to the United Nations and now a businessman, insists that blacks have magnified racism to rationalize their lack of success. "As for myself," he says, "I don't go looking for it, so I don't find it." However, as both Thomas Sowell and Ira Reid point out, West Indians (Stokely Carmichael, Marcus Garvey, and others) have been in the forefront of black radicalism. Other West Indians feel that they have encountered racism, and that they have in some cases been harmed by it. Dave Scott, who owns a clothing store in the Erasmus area, believes that discrimination impeded his progress when he worked on Wall Street, and his wife, Olive, says, "We have faced racism, and when we do, we can take action. We know we have the law on our side." But the Scotts are soft-spoken diplomats rather than militants, and neither feels that confronting discrimination aggressively serves them well. Asked whether he thinks racism has a controlling influence on the lives of black people, Scott

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INDIA SIGNS MOON TREATY

The Agreement governing the Activities of States on the Moon and other Celestial Bodies was signed on behalf of the Government of India on 18 January.

Adopted by the General Assembly on 5 December 1979, the Agreement describes the moon and its natural resources as "the common heritage of mankind", not subject to national appropriation. It stipulates that the moon shall be used "exclusively for peaceful purposes", and that parties should "undertake to establish an international regime, including appropriate procedures, to govern the exploitation of the natural resources of the moon as such exploitation is about to become feasible".

So far it has been signed by 11 States: Austria, Chile, France, Guatemala, India, Morocco, Netherlands, Peru, Philippines, Romania and Uruguay. It has been ratified by Chile, the Philippines and Uruguay.

snaps, "Nonsense! Of course, it's everywhere. I don't deny that there's discrimination. But it's not so great that a person can't succeed." These words might have come from Sowell's mouth. In a magazine interview he too readily conceded that discrimination is "so pervasive, it's like oxygen." But, he argues, the effects of racism are not so damaging that it must be uprooted from the national psyche before blacks can succeed. Were all discrimination so crippling, he has written, "Jews and Chinese would be poverty-stricken around the world."

This mild-mannered point of view puts Sowell and the Scotts in a distinct minority among American blacks. A National Urban League poll found that over 65 percent of American blacks believe that they face "a great deal" of discrimination in their lives, and most black leaders and intellectuals would probably agree. More sophisticated West Indians, whose judgments arise not only from personal experience but from a general atmosphere of opinion, might also be inclined to agree. Dr. Clem London, an assistant professor of curriculum studies at Fordham University, tells the typical West Indian story of struggle against adversity—wrapping packages at Macy's until his fingers were filled with blisters, typing up menus in the kitchen of a hospital for drug addicts—but abruptly shifts to an argument that discrimination *caused*, rather than hindered, his success. As part of a "divide and conquer" strategy, he claims, what Marx would have called "the reserve pool of labor" phenomenon, "whites told Caribbeans that they were better than blacks. And they bought into it." London goes on to ascribe both drug addiction and family dissolution among blacks to white conspiracies.

For an educated West Indian, success is a troubling phenomenon. To affirm the role of values is implicitly to deny the controlling influence of racism. Gerterly Dozier readily catalogues the personal and communal values that have lifted West Indians into the middle class, but then denies that values have a

significant role in explaining black economic success or failure. It is, she admits, perplexing.

SOWELL's gospel, unlike that of Reid or Frazier, has probably suffered through so much anathema because of the distinct political aims it serves (and because of the gratuitous sarcasm that Sowell directs at his arch-enemies, "liberal reformers"). Separated for a moment from the libertarian economic policy that they suggest, however, Sowell's various inferences seem less menacing and unacceptable. It is, for example, simply a matter of received wisdom that some values are economically more useful than others; Max Weber codified this wisdom in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. With blacks, however, the question of values is politically more touchy than with, say, Italians. It has been a long time since anyone has accused southern Europeans of genetic inferiority; Sowell's argument, on the other hand, invites critics to claim that he is suggesting the inferiority of blacks, a belief hardly extinguished in this country. Nevertheless, Sowell's observation about the effect of past discrimination on current values may become increasingly acceptable.

Rene Williams, who is black but not Caribbean, has spent several years watching West Indians arrive in Brooklyn with nothing and go on to build their own success. She has been forced to conclude, she admits, that "even if you moved racism out of the way, values would have a large part." ("I'll probably get my head chopped off for saying it," she sighs.) Of the improbable West Indian success story, she says, "I saw it, and I resented it, and it took me a long time to come to grips with it." Only when she visited the West Indies for the first time and saw the difficult conditions of daily life and, more important, the fact that blacks governed themselves in that world without interference from whites, did she begin to see the origin of Caribbean values.

Black scholars and leaders who

would never follow Sowell into his promised land of the free market nevertheless agree with his distinction between current discrimination and the effects of past discrimination. Shirley Chisholm, hardly a conservative, asserts, "We know that white people have had their foot on our neck, but we can't keep using that in 1982, because America has changed considerably." William Julius Wilson, a sociologist currently at the Center for Advanced Study at Stanford University, has argued, in *The Declining Significance of Race*, that blacks now suffer primarily not from the color of their skin but from having sunk into a multi-racial "underclass" for which the economy affords no remedies. And Bernard Anderson, an economist at the Rockefeller Foundation, takes Wilson's argument a step in the direction of Sowell's by asserting that "one can understand the difference between the working poor and the underclass on the basis of behavior and attitudes."

But do we have to go the last mile with Sowell? His work, as well as his person, have found their way to Washington, where the administration is busily dismantling the welfare state, such as it is. *The Economic Report of the President* practically quoted Sowell in asserting that "the long-term cost of paternalism may be to destroy an individual's ability to make decisions for himself." Is it possible to be against "paternalism"—to fear the social and psychological consequences of welfare—without agreeing that the poor should be left to fall with nothing below them but a skimpy safety net? Certainly it is. Which hardy West Indians wish to part with their social security, their Medicare, their subsidized and guaranteed student loans? None of these, of course, subverts self-reliance. But neither does Head Start, job training, school lunches, or even housing subsidies. The objection lodged by Sowell, Gilder, and others to such programs is based on an almost religious devotion to the workings of the free market, a devotion that the most fervent incarnation of the Protestant ethic need not share. □



The legend of HANK GREENSPUN

by Joseph Dalton

The newspaper publisher who called McCarthy "queer" is also a convicted gunrunner celebrated as a national hero of Israel, and a financial wheeler dealer who helped Howard Hughes buy Las Vegas. And what did the Watergate burglars want in his office safe?

ON OCTOBER 1952, Sen. Joseph McCarthy came to Nevada to attack Hank Greenspun, publisher of the *Las Vegas Sun*. Greenspun had been conducting a vendetta against the Senate's other leading red-baiter, Nevada senator Patrick McCarran. The War Memorial auditorium was packed for McCarthy's appearance, and Greenspun, typically, was in the audience with his wife, Barbara. McCarthy asked Greenspun to stand, which he did. "There he is," McCarthy shouted, "an admitted ex-communist!"

This, believe it or not, was a slip of the tongue. McCarthy had meant to say, "ex-convict"—a reference to Greenspun's felony conviction for running guns to Israel during the 1948 war of independence. But McCarthy's slip put Greenspun the journalist in an enviable legal position. Since the rally had been broadcast nationwide, he had been slandered in the hearing of everyone in Nevada. It was like a free pass to attack McCarthy in his newspaper, without fear that McCarthy would sue and risk a countersuit. Thus protected, the *Sun* became the first newspaper in the country to take off after McCarthy. Over the next year or so, Greenspun published ten columns about the senator. The first said:

It is common talk among homosexuals in Milwaukee who rendezvous at the White Horse Inn that Sen. Joe McCarthy has often engaged in homosexual activities. The persons in Nevada who listened to McCarthy's radio talk thought he had the queerest laugh. He has. He is.

The last column was read by many as an incitement to assassination:

I've never been one to make predictions but when a thing is inevitable, even I can foresee the future. Sen. Joe McCarthy has to come to a violent end. Huey Long's death will be serene and peaceful

Joseph Dalton is a freelance writer.

compared with the demise of the sadistic bum from Wisconsin.

And thus Greenspun, a lifelong Republican and not, obviously, a fastidious man, became a darling of liberals during the 1950s. He was still a Republican and an ardent Nixon supporter, on February 4, 1972 when Gordon Liddy, John Dean, and Jeb Magruder met with Attorney General John Mitchell and discussed breaking into Greenspun's office safe. What the Nixon administration wanted from Greenspun is one of the unsolved mysteries of Watergate. There were rumors (false) that Greenspun had information about mob connections of the leading Democratic candidate for the presidency, Edmund Muskie. More likely, it was hoped the safe would contain useful information from Greenspun's mysterious association, and later feud, with Howard Hughes.

Hank Greenspun, still alive and publishing at age seventy-two, may be just a footnote to history, but he is a footnote to an astonishing number and variety of chapters. He is one of the founders of Las Vegas. He is a national hero of the state of Israel. He is still a hero to many liberals for his stand against McCarthy and McCarran. He is a newspaper industry legend, described by A. J. Liebling as "an editor/publisher type supposed to have gone out with Der ringer pistols and the Gold Rush." Many people wish he had.

Now in a senior-statesman phase, Greenspun uses his dedication to Israel as a toastmaster's point of departure—how young Hank's favorite spot was the room where his grandfather slept in a small chicken farm in Marlboro, Massachusetts. How the chicken clucked while he lay on the bed, listening to his grandfather talk. How he would stare up at the portrait of Theodore Herzl, the founder of modern Zionism. And so on through his life and to the business at hand—selling bonds or political candidates.

THE VOICE is an urban growl—the voice of a cabdriver—although the corner of Flatbush and Nostrand avenues in Brooklyn was still mostly farmland when Herman Milton Greenspun was born there in 1909. His father ran a string of art and picture-framing shops, all unsuccessful to varying degrees. His mother sold, at various times, groceries, coal, insurance, bootleg whiskey, and secondhand books. Because Anna thought that young Hank should become a lawyer, he did. In 1930 he entered St. John's College night school, prelaw, and took a daytime job as a runner for Leblang-Gray's Theatre Ticket Agency, picking up unsold tickets at the theaters and hustling them back to Leblang's to be sold at a discount. Since Leblang's was located very near the center of the world, which at that time was Forty-second Street and Broadway, the job suited him.

Greenspun wanted to be Runyonesque. In Brooklyn there was a father who smelled of glue and punctuated quotes from the Talmud with the ping of a tack hammer, and a mother whose devotion to the law far outshone his own. But on Broadway there were hang-around guys in shiny automobiles and dolls and prewar Scotch, and gin in water glasses when the Scotch ran out. He ran through the theater district in the early evenings with his tie pulled to one side and his hat pushed back. He rolled his white shirtsleeves up to the elbow, old-time pool-room style. His hero was Heywood Brown.

There was politics too. If you were Jewish, of Hank's class and temperament, and had managed to avoid the socialist intrigues up at City College or down at NYU, that ordinarily meant Tammany Hall—the Tammany of honest graft, Red Mike Hylan, and Hymie Schoenstein, who had found illiteracy only a slight hindrance in a climb to become Brooklyn's Commissioner of Records.

But Tammany was not for Hank. "They gave you a turkey at Christmas," he says, waving his cigar, "and let you starve the rest of the year while they stole you blind, the bastards." He had been promoted to the counter at Leblang's, and his counterpane was a Republican precinct captain in Harlem. At his friend's urging, Greenspun joined the Fiorello H. LaGuardia Republican Club uptown on 117th Street, worked hard for LaGuardia's election as mayor, and, when he graduated from law school in 1934, went to work in the law offices of Vito Marcantonio, who had succeeded LaGuardia in Congress.

It was hardly a Bartleby-like existence, there in the politically active firm of Pinto and Marcantonio. But Greenspun never warmed to the law. He worked hard for the 1937 election of Tom Dewey as Manhattan district attorney but turned down Dewey's offer of a job as an assistant D.A. It paid only \$1,800 a year, less than he had made at Leblang's. So he drifted. He sold steel and bought a red Buick. He looked into buying small-arms plants. Then he got traffed.

Greenspun is what used to be called a man's man, since he didn't really mind army life, especially because he had nothing particularly pressing going on outside. In 1944, while stationed near Dublin, he married Barbara Ritchie, fifteen years his junior, the bright and pretty daughter of a prominent Irish-Jewish family. Captain Greenspun went to France in the weeks after D-Day with Patton's Third Army, and fought his way out of the Falaise Gap by midsummer. In early fall he was among the first troops into Nancy, where he celebrated Yom Kippur in the desecrated synagogue, the first services held there in five years. Participants were the soldiers of the Third Army and ten French Jews left from the 60,000 who had lived there before the war. He wrote home:

It must have been a beautiful structure, judging from the tremendous walls formerly lined with brass fittings. The brass is now missing. The copper frames of two giant tablets containing the Ten Commandments in Hebrew and French are also missing. The place where the Torahs were kept was destroyed by an axe. The chandeliers were ripped from the ceiling and sent to Germany. . . . All through the services, the eighty-six-year-old woman, present only because some nuns had hidden her away, wept incessantly. She was joined by the man whose son had recently been killed. When they said the Memorial for the Dead, the other civilians wept with them.

My memorial for the dead was for all my friends who have been killed, for all the Jews in Nancy who were killed, for the desecrated synagogue that tore at our hearts, for the old woman who looked more dead than alive, for the son



Hank Greenspun in 1955, after being acquitted of a federal charge of mailing matter tending to incite the murder of Sen. Joseph McCarthy.



The Hotel Flamingo, Las Vegas. Inset: Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel.

whose bereaved father kept tearing at his hair, and for the Chief Rabbi of Nancy, who had been among the last eighty Jews to be torn from their homes and shipped to Germany. Sixty of them were killed along the way.

We all made a vow today. Every American soldier who attended services knows that judgment will be visited on these fanatical beasts who have spread so much misery through the world. These barbarians, who have sworn to wipe out every Jew, will be brought to justice. We know that God won't let them escape, but we know also that it's a big job. He's going to need help... and we're going to help him.

The American troops slogged on toward Metz. The German resistance stiffened, and Hank froze in the endless knee-deep mud, until he was sent back to England, delirious, with a bad case of trenchfoot.

BACK IN New York in the winter of 1945, discharge papers in hand, Greenspun felt out of place. He was fast approaching middle age, with a young wife and a daughter now. The law seemed as dead an end as ever, and when a fast talker named Joe Smoot arrived in his office with a proposal to start a racetrack in Nevada, Greenspun was more than ready to listen. The two men decided to drive out; if things looked promising, Barbara would follow. Arriving in Las Vegas, they checked into the Last Frontier Motel. Hank, exhausted, got out of the car, stretched, and walked around. The temperature was in the mid-seventies and the sky stretched overhead forever. The town was gentle stucco, bright, low-slung against the mountains. Hank went for a dip in the

pool, found a phone, and told his wife simply, "Come on out. I'm never coming back."

"Who comes here?" A. J. Liebling, lost in a sea of Hawaiian shirts, asked Greenspun some years later.

"People who took it on the lam," Hank told him. Liebling nodded. "Lamisters," he said.

The old speakeasy crowd, the Broadway crowd, the wise guys Hank had known in New York before the war, had moved virtually en masse from Forty-second Street to Fremont Street. He quickly found people he could talk to. In 1946 there were maybe 13,000 people in Las Vegas, maybe 15,000 in all of Clark County, which is slightly larger than Massachusetts. They included at least one man of great vision—Benjamin ("Bugsy") Siegel, who had arrived the previous year with several million dollars in cash, later determined to belong to various elements of organized crime, with which he intended to build a great luxury hotel. Being Bugsy Siegel, he built the Flamingo.

There had been some idea of giving Las Vegas a movie-lot frontier look—some combination of Colonial Williamsburg and Old Tucson. But Bugsy Siegel reasoned that ordinary people gambled with the illusion that they could get rich, and they would gamble more, and thus lose more, if they did their gambling in plush baroque castles with beautiful women and expensive entertainment around them. So the Flamingo rose, alone, down on the Strip—twin-turreted, Siegel's fantastic, tacky neon idea of a grand hotel; and Las Vegas was set.

"You could go down to the Flamingo and spend all day, it was that far out there," says Benny Binion, who arrived in Las Vegas shortly before Greenspun. "Well, you didn't have to spend all day, but you might as well, since there wasn't anything else around there." Binion, past eighty now, sits most afternoons in the Horseshoe Casino, which he owns, wearing shirts with dollar gold pieces for buttons.

"You used to see old Hank out on the Strip," says Binion. "Friendly, hustling type. He had a little booster magazine, you know, what was going on." Just as Smoot's racetrack deal floundered, Greenspun ran into an old law school classmate named Ralph Pearl, and together they founded *Las Vegas Life*—"America's Only 5¢ Magazine"—with Pearl as editor and Hank as publisher, which meant he largely financed the operation from his savings. They were running hopelessly in the red until *Las Vegas Life* happened to publish a story referring to the owner of the Flamingo as Ben Siegel.

But not Bugsy, a nickname Siegel detested. It had been hung on him in New York with the suggestion that he did not quite have both oars in the water. Touched, Bugsy appeared in the offices of *Las Vegas Life* one afternoon to ask how the boys were making out. Not so good, he was told. How much for the back cover for a year, then? Greenspun gulped. Since nobody had ever asked for the back cover before, he

had no idea what it was worth. Timidly he asked for \$250 a week, and got it. "I didn't know who I was dealing with. I don't think I even knew his nickname was Bugsy," Greenspun says. Having decided that Hank was okay, Siegel hired him as a publicity man for the Flamingo, which, although open, was still unfinished. Greenspun wrote a column, "Flamingo Chatter," for the local newspaper, the *Review-Journal*, and gave away cars by the lotful, but nothing seemed to help. It seemed as if the hotel would never be finished and \$6 million had already been dropped into it. Siegel was a bad executive. His investors were impatient men. On June 20, 1947, Siegel was shot through the eye in Los Angeles, killers unknown. By the next day, the wise guys were already saying Hank had shot Bugsy as a publicity stunt.

GREENSPUN had other things going, and quit the Flamingo job. He was trying to start a radio station, and he had a piece of the recently built Desert Inn. The radio station was set to start broadcasting in December 1947. Hank had lined up a bunch of dignitaries for the opening. But on the day of the ceremony, he got a call. Ray Selk, a childhood friend, and Al Schwimmer, later founder of the Israeli air force, were waiting for him at the Last Frontier, and they had to see him.

Schwimmer and Selk explained they were trying to find guns and ammunition for Israel. President Truman had declared an arms embargo on the whole region, but that didn't really affect the Arabs, since they had national arsenals. But the state of Israel would come into existence May 15, 1948, whether the Israelis had guns or not. Hank had come out of his war with one very significant skill—he was an ordnance expert. He could tell what would shoot and what would blow up and what would not. He had to come with them immediately to check out the salvage yard in Hawaii. They would call Barbara with a suitable excuse.

Hank left the governor humming to himself on the podium and flew off to Hawaii. He quickly examined and loaded up fifty-eight crates of machine guns, still coated in Cosmoline, carefully marked the crates "aircraft engines," and sent them on their way to California for final delivery to Ensenada, Mexico. Back home in Las Vegas, Hank got word that federal agents were snooping around his crates as they sat on a pier, waiting for a ship. He rushed back out to the Coast, trying to hire a small ship or yacht to make a midnight run to Mexico. He found one, the *Idalia*, and loaded it up, but the captain wouldn't proceed. The *Idalia*, he pointed out, was riding awfully low in the water and would never make Mexico. Greenspun asked to be taken out into the Catalina Channel, where another ship would meet him. There was no other ship. Once out of U.S.

territorial waters, Hank pulled out a pistol and commandeered the yacht. They made Ensenada in nine days.

Greenspun did so well that the Haganah, the Jewish irregulars who later became the Israeli army, gave him another assignment. A 6,000-ton freighter, the *Kefalos*, was sailing for Tampico Bay, Mexico. All Hank had to do was find 5,985 more tons of arms to fill it, and send it on its way.

Greenspun spent the winter of 1947 in Mexico City, buying Springfield machine guns, ammunition, even some old cannon last fired by Pancho Villa at Pershing. With the *Kefalos* only two-thirds full, Hank got word that Arab pressure on the Mexican government was growing, that he needed a cover story. So he invented the Nationalist Chinese Purchasing Commission, and became Colonel Greenspun, buying guns so that Chiang Kai-shek could battle communism. Still, there were inquiries. Colonel Greenspun was informed that for the *Kefalos* to get out of Tampico Bay, he would have to produce papers proving she was bound for Taiwan. "Where do I get them?" he yelled into the telephone to Teddy Kollek, later the mayor of Jerusalem but then a young Haganah operative in New York. "A laundry?" Disconsolate, sure that at any moment the *Kefalos* would be impounded, he walked the streets of Mexico City with a sidekick. He happened to walk past an unpretentious square building whose sign proclaimed it to be the Embajada de China. Hank rubbed his eyes (says Hank). It was still there. He rushed inside and introduced himself as a wealthy industrialist interested in possible investments in Taiwan. Speaking in Yiddish, Greenspun told his young associate to keep the consul busy, then wandered off smiling to ransack a desk. He came up with stationery, envelopes, and two large metal seals to make the whole thing look official. The two left, still smiling and promising to be back, then ran to a typist they could trust. The phony papers worked, the last trainloads of matériel were loaded, and the ship steamed out of sight with Greenspun weeping on the dock (says Greenspun). As the May 15 deadline approached, there was one last trip to Mexico, and then Hank's gunrunning career was over. He returned to Las Vegas and to his wife Barbara, who had believed, for most of the time he was in Mexico, that he was trying to put together some sort of airline.

Back in Hank's own business world, Moe Dalitz, a gambler from Cleveland, had bought majority control of the Desert Inn and was slowly squeezing Greenspun out. Meanwhile, there was a bitter labor dispute between the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, the town's major paper, and the International Typographical Union. Locked out by the *R-J*, the printers had started their own paper across town, the *Free Press*. Boycotted by the casinos, the ITU was looking to sell. Some of the printers remembered that *Las Vegas Life* had been printed on *R-J* presses, so they



Two of the country's leading red-baiters, both targets of Hank Greenspun: (left) Sen. Patrick A. McCarran; (right) Sen. Joseph McCarthy.

approached Greenspun. The price was \$104,000. Hank bought the paper with a borrowed \$1,000 as down payment, found, when he moved in, that the paper had \$2,800 in cash on hand, and paid off the loan. He changed the name of the paper to the *Sun*, and started in the newspaper business on July 1, 1950.

Nine days later, Greenspun had his first scoop: LAS VEGAS PUBLISHER GUILTY OF FEDERAL CRIME. The gunrunning adventures had led to two indictments under the Export Control and Neutrality Act. The first had been dismissed, so the State Department was especially eager to convict him on the second. The trial was set for July 10 in Los Angeles. The prosecution had dug up the *Idalia* captain, who was only too eager to tell what a cold Mauser feels like when pressed to the side of your head. The government offered a deal—Greenspun's guilty plea in exchange for dropping the indictments against his three crew members. Hank agreed, even though it would make him a convicted felon and he would lose his right to vote, provided he could hold off until that afternoon. A baffled judge refused, but Greenspun was adamant: no deal this morning. The judge called a noon recess.

Everyone came back in the afternoon. Greenspun pleaded guilty and was fined \$10,000. Now why, asked the judge, did we have to go through all that? Hank grinned. He had noticed a reporter for the *Review-Journal* in the courtroom, and had managed to stage his conviction just beyond the paper's deadline. Then he went out and dictated his own bylined story to the *Sun* editors, who played it at the top of the front page.

SINCE THE column by the *Review-Journal's* editor was called "From Where I Sit," Hank decided to call his own front-page column "Where I Stand," and since the best way for a young paper to build circulation is to attack, he decided to go after somebody big. That's how he

picked the senior senator from Nevada, six-foot-five Patrick McCarran. With twenty years of seniority, McCarran was at the height of his power. He was chairman of the Judiciary Committee, a ranking member on Appropriations—and increasingly reactionary and bitter as the Nevada of ranchers and sheepherders was taken over by lamesters in flowered shirts. Yet at the beginning of every Senate session, the lamesters were invited to kick in money to help defeat all the bills outlawing gambling that McCarran was sure would be introduced this time around, but somehow never were. He was the model for the senator in *Godfather II*.

Greenspun was in the Senate press gallery for the debates on the McCarran-Walter Act, legislation that would drastically restrict immigration from central and southern Europe. He heard McCarran interrupt Sen. Herbert Lehman of New York, who was pointing out the discriminatory nature of the quotas, to declare, "I think we all know where the opposition to this bill comes from. It's a gang of cloak and suiters from New York." This anti-Semitic slur enraged Greenspun, who told Lehman, "For what that man said out there today, I'm going to hound him to his death."

Greenspun searched the Kefauver hearings on organized crime for information he could use against McCarran, and twice in March 1952 attacked McCarran in his column. Gus Greenbaum, who had replaced Bugsy Siegel at the Flamingo, told him "You'll ruin us by attacking the senator. I like your paper, I want to support you, but I am afraid you have gone just too far this time. They are driving us crazy from Washington."

Four days later, on March 24, the phone of the *Sun's* advertising manager began to ring at 9:15. It was the advertising manager at the Thunderbird, who said, "Cancel all our advertising, effective today." By 11:45, Las Vegas's twelve other casinos had pulled their ads, too, which represented 30 percent of the *Sun's* revenue. A lone exception was Benny Binion at the Horseshoe.

"A guy called me and said, We're gonna bust old Hank."

"Who called you?"

"Gus Greenbaum. He's dead now. [Garrotted in Phoenix in 1957.] I had no reason to boycott him. He said, My God, that's bad. So I said, What's bad about it. Go out and bust me too."

Greenspun put the Horseshoe out anyway, just to keep up appearances, and filed a \$225,000 lawsuit alleging a boycott conspiracy. He won a temporary injunction ordering the casino operators to continue advertising in the *Sun* until the case came to trial. Drew Pearson became interested in the story, and wrote a few columns. But it was clear that if Greenspun lost the suit, the paper would fold, and winning the suit rested on tying the boycott to McCarran.

Depositions filed during the summer of 1952 indicated that the boycott started with a call from

Taste Verdict: Merit.

Former higher tar smokers applaud MERIT as
"Best-tasting low tar" they've tried.

Can a low tar cigarette provide the taste incentive to switch smokers from higher tar brands?

Research proves MERIT can.

Taste Debate Ends.

Nationwide survey reveals over 90% of MERIT smokers who switched from higher tar were glad they did. In fact, 94% don't even miss their former brands.

Further Evidence: 9 out of 10 former higher tar smokers report MERIT an easy switch, that they didn't give up taste in switching, and that MERIT is the *best-tasting low tar they've ever tried.*

Year after year, in study after study, MERIT remains unbeaten. The *proven* taste alternative to higher tar smoking—is MERIT.



Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

© Philip Morris Inc. 1982

MERIT

Kings & 100's

Kings: 7 mg "tar," 0.5 mg nicotine—100's Reg: 10 mg "tar," 0.7 mg nicotine—
100's Men: 9 mg "tar," 0.7 mg nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Dec '81

McCarran to a part-owner of the Thunderbird. Just before the suit came to trial, when McCarran would almost certainly have been called as a witness, the casinos settled with Greenspun for \$80,500 and a gentleman's agreement to continue advertising with him.

Two years later McCarran ended a speech with the cry, "Greenism must be defeated!" and then died of a heart attack.

The boycott troubles ended just in time for Greenspun to concentrate on his feud with McCarran's colleague Joe McCarthy. After the confrontation at the War Memorial auditorium, Greenspun offered a \$10,000 reward to anyone who could prove that he had ever been a communist. And he began his remarkable series of columns. Greenspun admits today that he had no real evidence that McCarthy was a homosexual, despite some material supplied by a young associate of Drew Pearson's named Jack Anderson.

"Sure I called him a faggot," Greenspun says. "Maybe he was. He was as much a homosexual as the hundred homosexuals he said worked in the State Department, which he never produced. It was fighting the devil with fire."

Greenspun's column predicting that McCarthy would be assassinated was too much for the senator, who tried to have the post office revoke the *Sun's* second-class mailing privileges. Greenspun went to Washington to explain himself to the postal authorities and found himself at a cocktail party at Martin Agronsky's house, where Walter Lippmann began upbraiding him for the style of his McCarthy columns. Drew Pearson came to Greenspun's defense, saying, "No, Walter, you're wrong, you're writing for the 9 percent of Americans who already know what McCarthy is, and Hank's putting it into terms the other 91 percent can understand."

IN 1954, the FBI arrested a Las Vegas woman named Roxie Clippinger on charges of transporting girls across state lines for immoral purposes. An hour later, Clark County sheriff Glen Jones raided Roxie's sleazy motel, which caused hoots all over town, since Roxie's had operated quite openly, without fear but with quite a lot of favor, for at least ten years.

The very next day Hank Greenspun ran front-page pictures of scantily clad women covering their faces and bodies with newspapers as the sheriff and photographers burst in. He captioned it, "In Las Vegas, everybody reads the *Sun*." He also charged, on the same front page, that Sheriff Jones was a part-owner of Roxie's, and ran a campaign picture of the sheriff, who was up for reelection, atop an ancient bicycle. He captioned that one, "Sheriff Glen Jones pedaling a little on his own." The sheriff responded with a million-dollar libel suit.

Drew Pearson found Greenspun a private eye,

who visited Roxie in her California exile and told her in a remarkable Italian accent that he wished to purchase her business. "That guy cost us a fortune in little microphones alone," Greenspun recalls. But into one of those little mikes Roxie said, "We had Jones on the payroll a long time." The suit was thrown out, the sheriff lost the election and was indicted.

"I wish that house was still here, and I wish Glen Jones was still running it," Benny Binion says today. "Keep 'em off the streets."

The next year the *Sun* charged that Las Vegas city attorney George Franklin had used his office to profit in land deals, and Franklin sued. Greenspun hit back with a series of columns detailing Franklin's involvement in a baby-smuggling ring. He also claimed that the judge hearing the libel case had received two children from the ring, and asked that he disqualify himself. At this point Franklin offered to settle the suit for \$75,000. Greenspun's insurance company agreed, but Greenspun refused. The insurance company gave Hank the \$75,000 and washed its hands.

Greenspun won the case in the Nevada supreme court, and pocketed the cash. A bitter George Franklin told friends that Hank was the only man he knew who could get himself sued and make money on the deal.

The late 1950s and early 1960s were Greenspun's glory years. By 1954 Las Vegas was the fastest-growing small city in the country, and the population had reached 45,000. After putting out his legendary paper, Greenspun would head for rollicking late nights on the Strip with Sinatra and the Rat Pack, occasionally joined by the odd Kennedy. (Despite Greenspun's support for Nixon in 1960, President Kennedy pardoned him for his felony conviction in 1962, so he could vote again.)

Greenspun branched out into other projects: he became owner of a golf course, and when a group of furniture store owners begged him to run Nevada's first television station so they could sell some sets, he started KLAS-TV. He ran briefly and unsuccessfully for governor.

Greenspun insists that he has always been opposed to gambling (though this mystified Benny Binion, who says Hank never told him that), but that since gambling is in Nevada to stay, the *Sun* should go after the peripheral vices—prostitution, minor political corruption, and so on. Despite an occasional grumpy "Where I Stand" column, and despite Greenspun's national reputation as a liberal hero, the *Sun* never turned its investigative attention to the people who actually ran Las Vegas. It was an out-of-town paper, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, that exposed how Jimmy Hoffa used the Teamsters pension funds to bankroll the expansion of Las Vegas in the 1950s. (A \$475,000 loan made to Greenspun in 1961 by the Bank of Las Vegas was later taken over by the Teamsters' pension fund.)

ON NOVEMBER 20, 1963, just in time to mess up coverage of one of the biggest stories of the century, a fire started in the air-conditioning system at the *Sun* plant, and the entire paper burned to the ground. For a while, Greenspun printed a miniature *Sun* on the *Review-Journal* presses, but this was too limiting. Then he began printing in California and flying the paper in every day, but that was too expensive. His financial resources were straining their limits, and then Hank Greenspun met Howard Hughes.

In the 1950s you used to see Howard Hughes wandering along the Strip, a comic sinister figure in leersucker and tennis shoes, bone thin but still handsome, accompanied by what were then politely called omatotes. He was thought to be a great businessman, but in fact almost nothing Howard Hughes ever touched made money while he ran it. He could afford that, since the Hughes Tool Company, founded by his father, made tricone rotary rock bits, which were used to drill oil wells, and brought in about \$30 million a year. By the mid-1960s, locked in a titanic struggle for the control of Trans World Airlines, Hughes was mentally over the edge. But very few people knew this and certainly not the public, which clung to the image of the Howard Hughes of thirty years before, the dashing pilot and film director. One who did know was Robert Maheu, who visited Hughes in the Bahamas in 1957 and ended up running his businesses for thirteen years without ever aying eyes on his boss.

Las Vegas was pleased to have Hughes when he arrived at the Desert Inn on Thanksgiving weekend, 1966, and took over two floors, ostensibly for two weeks. He stayed four years, in a blacked-out fifteen-seventeen-foot room on the top floor, where he seemed to be happy. His staff of retainers was pretty sure he was happy, although he refused to see most of them. They were sure because he sang, "Hey jobba rebop" over and over.

One person who wasn't happy was Moe Dalitz,

who ran the Desert Inn. The Hughes group had told him they were only going to stay for two weeks, which was fine with him, since the period between Thanksgiving and Christmas is the gaming industry's slowest season. But now it was after the first of the year, high rollers were coming in, and Dalitz had no place to put them. Hughes didn't come out of his room, and most of his staff were Mormons, so none of them was gambling. Dalitz wanted to evict them all—or, alternatively, sell the place to them. Greenspun's lawyer in Washington, Ed Morgan, was an old friend of Bob Maheu's from their FBI days together. Through Greenspun's good offices, Morgan got Dalitz and Maheu together for a deal. Morgan received a \$150,000 finder's fee from Dalitz, of which \$25,000 went to Hank.

Thus began a curious intertwining of the fortunes of Hank Greenspun and Howard Hughes. Since Hughes slept during the day and was up all night, he had Maheu suggest to Greenspun that KLAS run movies all night. Hank said that he couldn't afford to do that, but Hughes could, so why didn't he buy the station? Hughes did, for \$3.6 million. The *Sun* received a prepaid, \$500,000, fifteen-year contract from Hughes for hotel and casino advertising. But Greenspun continued to bill Hughes for ads as they ran. In effect, he had an interest-free \$500,000 loan; Greenspun did not begin to deduct advertising bills from the prepaid half million until 1972. In 1967, Hughes loaned Greenspun another \$4 million, at 3 percent interest with eight years to repay, a loan, the *Wall Street Journal* said, "General Motors couldn't have gotten at any bank." Greenspun appeared as a character witness for Hughes at hearings to determine whether he would receive a Nevada gaming license. He was generally accused of selling his soul to Howard Hughes.

Greenspun has no good explanation for the advertising, but maintains that \$3.6 million was a fair price for the television station. He says the loan was a personal favor after Hughes reneged on a



Bugsy Siegel's corpse, 1947.

The Best Selling



The Ford Escort.

Sales estimates based on 1981
calendar year world wide production figures
establish that Ford Escort is
the best selling car in the world.



There's A Ford In America's Future.

Car In The World.



Seat belts save lives—buckle up.

land deal concerning a golf course that Greenspun owned. Hughes had thrown the Tournament of Champions Golf Classic off the Desert Inn Country Club because he didn't want hordes of people flooding the hotel where he lived. Since the tournament meant a great deal to Las Vegas, he was criticized for this. Ever sensitive to bad publicity, he believed that if he bought the Paradise Valley course from Greenspun, he could move the tournament there.

But first he wanted Greenspun to buy up 2,500 acres around the golf course. "He wanted me to front for him, because people saw Howard Hughes and the price went up," Hank says. The original loan was for Greenspun to pay off what he owed on the golf course and to buy up the land around it. Then, in the middle of the deal, Hughes found out that

the Paradise Valley course was irrigated with effluent water from the city's sanitation district. Terrified of germs, and not realizing that the Desert Inn course outside his window used the same water, Hughes tried to back out. In the negotiations that followed, Hughes agreed to buy the club for \$2.6 million, but not the surrounding land. The loan was extended to after the year 2000 as a consolation.

THE SUN gave Hughes a fairly good press, but then, at the time, so did the *Review-Journal*. So did everybody. Greenspun was working to rid Las Vegas of "criminal elements," he says, and Hughes did buy out casinos that were owned by people like Dalitz, who had long associations

with such elements. It was generally thought that Hughes would create jobs and give Las Vegas a more sophisticated financial image. "I thought he'd be good for Las Vegas, good for Nevada," Greenspun says. "Now I don't know what went on in his mind—who did? He might have thought he bought my editorial policy." Greenspun produces a memo, dated April 24, 1968, that Hughes wrote to Maheu. It begins, "Please watch me carefully and please don't let me go to sleep at all." That is crossed out. It then reads, "Bob—Please call Hank if he is awake and tell him I just read his column and I seriously think he ought to get the Nobel Prize for it, it is that great..." It goes on to read, "Now that Hank has allied himself with us, I don't think we should leave any smallest stone unturned..."

The Sun's coverage of Hughes was favorable right up until November 1970, when Bob Maheu, Hank's closest friend in the Hughes organization, lost the bitter infighting around Hughes and was fired. Hughes fled in mystery to Nassau, and the Sun attacked bitterly. "That was after I got the memos," Hank says. "After I read the memos, I could see what kind of guy he was."

The memos. Since Hughes refused to see almost all of the men who actually ran his empire, he communicated with them mainly through memos written in longhand on lined legal paper. After the Maheu split, Greenspun came into possession of about 200 of these memos—he has

~~Please watch me carefully and please don't let me go to sleep at all.~~

~~But, try not to starve me.~~

~~And you said?~~

~~Yes?~~

~~Any messages?~~

Bob: Please call Hank if he is awake and tell him I just read his column and I seriously think he ought to get the Nobel Prize for it, it is that great!

Do you have anything new? TV news (Ch. 13) said when Humphries was questioned by the press about the possibility of the deal being postponed, that he responded: "That's ridiculous!"

Bob I hope you will go all the way on this. Now that Hank has allied himself with us,

"Please watch me carefully..." One of the Howard Hughes memos the plumbers may have wanted from Greenspun's safe.

never said how, but they almost certainly came from Maheu—which he stuffed into his office safe. In January 1972, as the shenanigans surrounding Clifford Irving's bogus biography of Hughes began to surface in the press, Greenspun leaked a few of those memos. On February 3, Wallace Turner reported in *The New York Times* that Greenspun had a large collection of Hughes's memos in his safe. At the February 4 meeting held in John Mitchell's office, where it was decided to bug the Watergate office of Democratic Party chairman Lawrence O'Brien, Mitchell suggested that as long as they were about it, it might be worth taking a look into Greenspun's safe.

According to Watergate "plumber" E. Howard Hunt, he met later that month with Ralph Winte, chief of security for Summa Corporation, Howard Hughes's company, and on February 20, he and Jordan Liddy flew to Las Vegas, where Winte provided them with a rough floor plan of Greenspun's office. Winte denies that these meetings ever took place or that he provided Liddy and Hunt with any help at all. Howard Hunt says that Winte agreed to provide a plane for the getaway after the burglary. But the plan was vetoed by Winte's superiors at Summa, and it never came off. James McCord testified, however, that Liddy was still talking about breaking into Greenspun's safe in April or May 1972, and in 1973, John Ehrlichman told Nixon that Liddy had broken into it. (All this is in *Nightmare*, by J. Anthony Lukas.)

In August 1972, while Greenspun was in Israel and his office door was locked, someone did try to break into the tan Meilink safe that sits in the corner of his office under the picture of Richard Nixon, and didn't succeed. Assuming the object was those memos, what could be in them? The Nixon people might have feared that the memos contained damaging information about a \$100,000 payment made by Hughes to Bebe Rebozo, when Hughes was experiencing difficulties with the Justice Department's antitrust division and wanted the AEC to stop nuclear testing. Or they might have wanted to know what Larry O'Brien knew about Hughes and Nixon, since Hughes had employed O'Brien's public relations firm. Richard Nixon's brother Donald had also worked for Hughes. . . .

"Whatever it was, they wanted it pretty bad, huh?" Hank says.

Robert Maheu shrugs. "Now you're asking me the answer to Watergate."

IN 1966, when Howard Hughes moved into Las Vegas, Hank Greenspun was the owner of a struggling newspaper. In 1970, when Hughes disappeared in the middle of the night, Greenspun had become a wealthy man. He owns the cable-television franchise for the area. He has mining interests in the center of the state that are potentially fabulously rich.

Las Vegas, bounded on the north by railroad tracks and black slums, is moving south, into the land that Howard Hughes "stuck" Greenspun with. That land is now worth anywhere from \$50,000 to \$180,000 an acre. The *Sun* makes a little money, Hank says, although its circulation is only a little more than half the *Review-Journal's* 105,000.

It is a very mediocre newspaper, though—not only compared with *The New York Times* or the *Washington Post*, but also when measured against good, small regional papers like the *Charlotte Observer* or the *Sacramento Bee*. The front-page column grew more shrill through the 1970s, as Greenspun had to explain himself more and more often. Summa Corporation placed a lien on the *Sun* in 1972 to guarantee payment of that \$4 million note, and Greenspun retaliated with a \$142 million damages suit that has been before the Nevada supreme court twice, and will soon go back again. The battles with Summa seem to have taken something out of him; in the early Seventies he wrote, curiously, "It is a little late but I must freely accept blame for helping create [Hughes's domination of the state]. I had prostituted my newspaper sufficiently in Hughes's interest and would have no more of it."

In the pages of the *Review-Journal* they call him Citizen Greenspun, and his political power is probably greater now than it ever was. "You have to be an awfully stupid politician to run without him," a Nevada politics-watcher says. Greenspun scoffs at his alleged political power—"I can maybe influence 3,000 votes," he says.

But the fact remains that Nevada, which adds its second congressman this year, is still a very small place. When the Republicans figure that 10,000 votes outside Las Vegas are enough to override the Democratic majority in the city, 3,000 votes seems like quite a lot. Greenspun can still hammer away, day after day, and turn heads.

"I don't believe in an objective press, a responsible press," Hank says. "I believe in a subjective press. If I do an investigation and I find out somebody's a crook, I'm not going to give him his side of it, to gain votes, to seduce the people. McCarthy used to complain that the press didn't print his side of it—the press built the sonofabitch up with his lies and filth and seducements. So I'm a subjective press. I make my judgment of a guy, and it's published in the *Las Vegas Sun*."

Greenspun's style of personal journalism looks good when he's taking off after Joe McCarthy, but is less attractive when he's taking off after the Internal Revenue Service in a twenty-one-part series after it has hauled him into court. But his style is ideally suited to Nevada, which remains the way Mark Twain described it in *Roughing It* (1872): a place where "the lawyer, the editor, the banker, the chief desperado, the chief gambler, and the saloon keeper occupied the same level of society, and it was the highest." □

A Story

Home Style Cooking

SUGAR

AMONG THE FREAKS

by Lewis Nordan

I KNEW I had made a mistake when the iced tea came with a spoon sticking out of it. I was in the Skelly truck stop restaurant in Alma, Arkansas. It's got a sign that says HOME COOKING and a glass case full of slabs of coconut pie and chocolate pie with real dilapidated meringue on them and a couple of flies crawling around on the inside of the glass.

Meringue and flies don't mean a thing compared with tea. You can scoop that meringue off and sling it up under some furniture and never see it again, and there's not a nickel's worth of taste in a fly, even if you do happen to eat one. It's the iced tea in a place that predicts what the food is going to look like when it comes out. I learned that from my mama, who served instant potato sandwiches on light bread. She also pronounced meringue as merry-gew, if you want some idea of what kind of cook she was.

In fact, I've got to tell you about my mama. She used to cut a magnolia blossom off the tree in our side yard and put it on the dining room table for decoration. "Big as a dinner plate," she would always say, which made it sound kind of sickening in the first place, if you see what I mean. It was so sweet-smelling it would give you cavities. Not really, of course. That was my grandmama's joke, Sugar Mecklin. I wanted to live with Sugar, but nobody would let me. The magnolia wouldn't cause cavities, but it would give you Excedrin Headache Number 57, if you remember your TV commercials at all, before you could jerk a cat in two. That's the one where two goats are butting each other in the head.

The worst thing was she would leave it on the table so long. She would leave it there a month, seemed like. She would leave it there until it was all black and horrible and runny before she would throw it out. Even if she'd been a better cook you couldn't have eaten in the presence of that magnolia.

Lewis Nordan lives and wanders in Arkansas.

Nobody could. My daddy could, of course.

But not any normal person, no way, José, which is something else my grandmama Sugar used to say.

I took one look at that tea and I said, "Instant!" right out loud. Couldn't have stopped myself if I tried. Some customers looked over at me. I said "Instant," another couple of times real loud, and clapped my hands together when I said it. They might think instant means waitress in German or some other language, you don't know.

You're going to say, "Now he sounds a little crazy to me," and I don't blame you a bit. I am crazy, I act that way. I start acting crazy whenever I'm under the influence of Winston Krepps.

Winston is this guy I help out whenever he asks me. He's a full-time quadriplegic, got him a motorized wheelchair and everything. I was supposed to meet Winston at this truck stop and help his attendant drive him out to west Oklahoma to some kind of conference he was going to.

Winston jumped off a bridge when he was a boy and hit a submerged boat, broke his neck pretty as you please. I said, "I bet you won't be jumping off any more bridges anytime soon, will you," and Winston said he had to agree. He said he learned his lesson the first time. I lived with Winston for a while a couple years ago, helped him out. He says I ought to get a more realistic view of life, and other helpful advice. I have to agree.

I get along fine with Winston. The trouble is, I've got this personality flaw. That's what Winston told me. I'm ashamed to tell you about it, but here's the truth. Funny-looking people make me go crazy. You're going to say, "Uh-oh, look out, he's a mean one." It's not true. Winston'll tell you that himself. I'm as sweet a guy as you ever want to meet—Sugar Mecklin, named after my grandmama. Twenty-four years old, high school equivalency diploma—I mean what else do you want. Burt Reynolds, or what?



But I never can treat crippled people like they're real. To me they're just a bunch of freaks, not much better than a midget. And don't get me started on the blind. I took work out at the School for the Blind in Little Rock for a while, so I know what's on a blind man's mind. They've got this good sense of smell, though, I'll give them that.

Anyway, it's a problem I've got. Winston says it doesn't matter to him, he likes me anyway, which I appreciate. Part of the problem is I run into so many of them. In the Safeway, squeezing canteloupes, look out!—somebody's going to sneak up behind you and hand you a deaf-mute card and cost you a quarter and make you think for about the one-millionth time that you might try to learn sign language off he hand illustrations on the back.

Or you're down at Roger's Ozark Pool Hall, shooting a little snooker, hold on!—here comes a man with one leg shorter than the other and he's wearing one of those built-up shoes, rocking his way around the table, rocka rocka rocka, while he chalks his cue and takes you for every nickel you got in your pocket. How are you going to shoot snooker with a rocker?

I went out with a girl one time who showed me a glass eye she wore around her neck on a gold chain. I never asked her whose eye it was, I just drove her home. I counted myself lucky I hadn't made a big hit with her. Think about taking a girl's blouse off and finding an eye staring out at you. What kind of life can you live when you keep meeting people who might do that to you?

And you try applying for a job in Fort Smith, second largest town in Arkansas. Just try it and see what happens. A third of the men you shake hands with will have two fingers missing on their right hand, and the rest of them will be wearing a hearing aid. They wear those flesh-colored rascals that fit behind your ear and look like you've got a disease. I can't stand a hearing aid. One of those big curved horns you used to see in pictures would be all right, but not something that looks like ear disease.

Deformed people are attracted to me, see. I'm a lightning rod and they're a big dark cloud just rubbing his old hands together, he's so happy.

Wait till I tell you what happened to me when I was a child growing up in Mississippi. A pipeline for natural gas was being put through the Delta and had everybody all excited. A lot of new work opened up. Transient workers from all over the country piled into our little town in trailers. My daddy, trying to latch on to some of the new money that was flowing through, rented out our side yard with the magnolia tree. It was a good place for a mobile-home hook-up, he said. You probably already know what happened. A family of midgets moved in. You wouldn't think there would be many midgets in the construc-

tion field, would you. But there they were, a whole trailerful of them.

I USED to be Winston's attendant. That's the kind of job I'm always getting myself into. I lived with him for about six months before he moved to Hot Springs to teach in the Rehab Center there. He's a poet, and they tell me he understands the problems of the handicapped and is well appreciated for his good work. I don't doubt it a bit.

Here's the thing, though. It was a relief to me when he moved down there. When I was living with him I had this unhealthy compulsion to be the best attendant the world has ever known. Winston says I ought to try to break myself of that. He says I'm just a generous kind of guy and I take everything too far, even generosity.

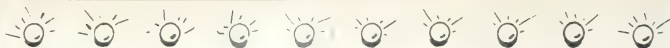
I didn't catch on to what I was doing at the time, but I think I see it now. I would do anything in the world that Winston told me, and I mean anything. My goal was to give Winston the freedom to do anything he would have done if he never had jumped off that bridge in the first place.

He said, "Okay, what if I told you I couldn't stand you? What if I said I'd shoot you dead if I could hold a gun and pull the trigger?" I swear, it scared me. I didn't know the answer. I knew it wouldn't come to that. Winston wouldn't do that to me. But you see what I mean. It's a question you want to know the answer to.

I did plenty of other stuff though. If Winston was dead drunk and wanted more whiskey, I poured it down him, brother, no questions asked, forget about tomorrow. Next day he'd be sick and I'd be holding the pan he was gagging into and he'd catch his breath for a second and he'd say, "Use your goddamn brain, man! Don't feed a drunk man whiskey!" Too late, and just don't tell me to do it again. That's what I would think, I wouldn't say it. I make it a rule never to disagree with a freak.

If he wanted to blow the horn in traffic, I blew it, forget about rude, forget about unnecessary. If Winston wanted to stay late at a party that everybody else had already left and the host wanted us the hell out of his house, we stayed. "Christ, don't let me do that again," he'd say when he caught on what had happened. Same thing—don't ask it again. Plenty of times I drove down roads I knew were the wrong road, because Winston had misread the map. I made wrong turns into one-way traffic because Winston had his directions mixed up.

I understand it better now. Winston explained it to me. He said it was a way of redressing the wrong in myself, what I knew was wrong. He said I felt guilty for thinking he wasn't real. He said I was trying to act like he, Winston, was the real person and



that I was the one that was something else, something less. He said it would suit him fine if I was to disagree with him sometime. He said it would beat hell out of driving into one-way traffic.

It didn't help. I still do whatever a freak tells me. When I'm under the influence of Winston, even non-freaks can control me.

Like the tea, for example. I can't stand instant tea. My mama, who was the worst cook you ever want to meet up with, used to make instant tea when I was little. They say the product has been improved since then but it's a lie, it's the same.

My mama wasn't deformed, but she was a kind of freak. My daddy actually called her a freak one time, right to my face. We were sitting out on the porch swing and Daddy was shooting out the Christmas lights around the porch, still up in August, with a Red Ryder BB gun, manufactured at the plant right out here in Springdale, with a leather thong hanging off the side. He said, right out of the clear blue, like when a daddy decides his boy ought to be told some important thing that he'll need to know about for the rest of his life, like about tail or something, he said, "Sugar, your mama is a first-class freak. It has not escaped my attention." What's a child going to do with that kind of information, I ask you? He was telling me he loved my mother. He might just as well have said, "I have been cursed with premature ejaculation, but I love family life anyway." What's a child supposed to say? What's he supposed to think about for the rest of his life? And anyway, who arranged for the midgets to live in the side yard with the magnolia tree? Not Mama. I remember she did introduce me to a clubfooted Latvian girl, and she kept giving us that look that says she's just dying for us to like each other right away and get married and have her a passel of little clubfooted Latvian grandchildren but she doesn't want to seem pushy so just go right on and take our time.

I KNEW I was going to drink that tea the minute I saw it. I caught a couple of flies with my hand, just to calm down. I took the tea from the waitress and said, "Donkey shane, honey." I was using my German accent to deal with her, couldn't hurt.

The reason was, this waitress had a mean look. She was old and had heavy biceps and old-fashioned heart-shaped lips painted over her regular lips. I didn't look to see if she had her stockings rolled down to her ankles or was wearing white socks, but I bet it was one or the other. She wasn't wearing any kind of waitress uniform, just a plain blue dress with a broad collar. She looked like somebody who was having to work on her day off, so just watch

out, Jack, don't mess with her.

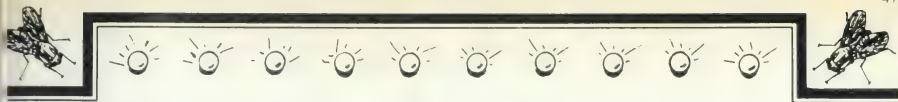
I wasn't wrong about the tea. I looked down in the glass. There was a solid brown mass at the bottom. I pushed it around and around until it broke up and an amber foam floated up to the top. Presweetened and lemon flavored, same as Mama used to make, you could smell it.

And I wasn't wrong about the food either. It was as bad as Mama's. In fact, I've got to tell you about Mama's cooking. The scariest meal she fixed was spaghetti. The recipe was real simple. For the sauce she dumped a couple of quarts of canned tomatoes into a big skillet, along with an onion chopped into four pieces. That was all. There were no other ingredients. No garlic, no salt, no meat, no oregano—nothing. Listen to this. When the tomatoes were bubbling, she stripped the cellophane off a package of noodles and, without separating them, jammed them up under the hot tomatoes like a short baton. They just sat there and cooked until they were a solid gummy rod of pasta.

My daddy, he was a little red-faced man with webbed toes on both his feet and went around barefoot all the time. He claimed this was his favorite dish. He would clean his plate. I mean he really liked it, he wasn't just being nice. He'd finish up and he'd say, "Whew!" He'd push his chair back from the table and stretch out his little short legs with his old duck toes hanging off the end, and he'd pat his stomach with both hands. He'd say, "I ought not, I'm going to get fat if I do, but, honey, if you'd be kind enough to slice me off another three, four inches of that spaghetti, I do believe I could find a place for it." Do you see what I mean? It's no wonder I've got some personality problems.

I played it safe with the waitress. I wrapped the Salisbury steak up in a paper napkin and stuffed it inside the torn plastic lining of the chair I was sitting in. I let the mashed potatoes get cold and stiff enough to stick to the underside of the table. I hoped they would hang there long enough for me to make my getaway. I didn't know what to do with the cole slaw, so I scooped it up in the palm of my hand and looked around the room. When I thought nobody was looking, I lobbed it onto a table nearby. Nobody was sitting at the table, and the dishes from the last customer hadn't been bused yet. I had hoped it would hit one of the plates, but it didn't. It looked okay where it did hit, though, mostly in one of the ashtrays.

When the waitress brought the check, she noticed I had cleaned my plate. For a second there I thought she was going to tell me what a good boy I was, but she didn't. She just gave me one of her suspicious looks and slapped the check down in front of me. I think I know why she was mad at me. I got the impression she could tell I hitchhiked in



ere. I got the impression she knew I had caught her on rides to get here, the first one to Winslow with college boy in a 280Z and the other one with a man in a twenty-five-year-old Cadillac. I got the impression she knew he told me he was driving to Jaco to kill his brother-in-law and showed me the pistol he was going to use. I got the impression she was thinking, "You're batting .500 already, sonny-o, don't try nothing smart with me. I got the impression hitchhikers are on an especially low rung of the social ladder in a truck stop, especially those who can't do any better than an Arky college boy and a murderous Texan. She didn't say a word about it, but I've got this ability."

Just then Winston and his attendant drove up. The attendant's name was Floyd, Winston had told me on the phone. I recognized the van right away when I saw it out the window. It's a white Ford with a hydraulic lift on the back. I thought about Winston and remembered he would be in his old heavy-umming buzzing chair. I couldn't stand that thing.

Old Biceps looked in my direction from the next table. She had found the ashtray full of cole slaw and didn't act happy about it. I checked the mashed potatoes and thought they had started to lose their rip. I eased away from the table and went outside to the parking lot to meet Winston and Floyd. I didn't know Floyd, just his name, which sounded a little offish to me, if you want the truth. The waitress was still busy with the slaw problem and didn't see me leave.

NOW HERE is the way things can turn on you. I had been worrying about dealing with Winston's being a freak. There was a bigger problem with Floyd. He wasn't the pretty-boy I had expected. In fact, he was extra ugly. He was ugly enough to qualify for a full-time freak, you ask me. Sugar Mecklin would have said he was ugly enough to strike you blind. I shook hands with him out in the parking lot and went blind.

It's the truth. He was there, I just couldn't see him. The only thing I noticed about him before I lost my sight was that Floyd was a black man. I wouldn't want you to think I'm prejudiced against black people. You might think so, since you know I grew up in Mississippi. But it's not true. In fact, I grew up thinking my family was part Negro. My randmama Sugar told me ever since I can remember that she was one quarter black. She'd say, "One quarter black, and it had to be the hind quarter."

Her right leg and hip weren't black exactly, they were more purple. It was a birthmark, I guess. I don't know what age I was before I finally caught on that she was making a joke. I used to roll around in the linoleum floor of her kitchen and try to look

up Sugar's dress to see how high her blackness went. She'd kick me away from the sink, real playful, and she'd say, "You little freak."

Anyway, Floyd was black and I couldn't see him. I looked, but he just wasn't there. It turned out, though, that I wasn't blind after all. Floyd was invisible. I could see everything around him. I saw the parked tractor trailers, I saw the greasy asphalt and the diesel pumps. I could see Winston just fine. He looked all right, too, as good as he ever looks. But Floyd wasn't there. He was too ugly to be seen.

WINSTON SAID that before he ate he wanted to be taken into the souvenir section of the truck stop. He said he was collecting material for a poem. I knew what he wanted to look at. He wanted to look at the Bowie knives and billy clubs and Confederate flags and bumper stickers that say I JUST BARFED and I'M GLAD and oil paintings of Jesus riding shotgun in a Kenworth hauling logs.

Floyd said, "Nah, we don't have time."

Do you think I'd ever say such a thing to Winston?

Winston said, "I'm going in there, open the door."

Floyd wouldn't do it. Floyd said, "What you want me to get you to eat?"

Winston dropped the subject of the souvenirs and rolled into the restaurant. He said, "I believe I'll have a beer."

Floyd said, "You don't want any beer."

I thought, I like Floyd pretty good, invisible or not. It was an odd thing to be thinking, if you see what I mean.

ALL DURING the meal I spoke with this exaggerated British accent. It tickled Winston and Floyd to death, but I was serious. You can't go into a restaurant with a pair of freaks and not do something to protect yourself. I used words like *bloody good* and *old chap* and *amusing*. Partly it was to throw the waitress off my trail. We had Lady Biceps again, and I didn't know whether she had found the Salisbury steak or not.

The funny part is, she didn't recognize me. I'm terrible with accents, and I never fool anybody, but with her it was working perfect. She looked at me like I wasn't there at all. She could see Floyd just fine, you could tell, but she couldn't see me. It scared me a little, to tell the truth, even though I always thought it would be kind of nice to be invisible.

One time I paid a woman at a carnival five dollars to make me invisible, and do you think she would do it? Why, no. She tried to give me the five dollars back. She said I reminded her of her poor little sweet



nephew who was a harelip (which I'm not) and why didn't I just run along and spend my money on something else. I said, "Uh-unh, honey, we made a deal. I got a signed contract." She said, "I ain't a real gypsy. I was just lying to you. I can't make nobody invisible. You scat." You talk about mad, that was me. I tore that contract up right in her sassy face. Her name was Sister Medium Jackson, and she could have done it, too, if she'd tried.

Right now I had this waitress problem. I made some squawking and hooting noises at her, like jungle birds and monkeys. I stretched out the features of my face with my fingers. It didn't faze her a bit. She didn't bat an eye. She wasn't faking either. She didn't give me that look that says she really does see me and she knows what a bratty little jackass I am and wouldn't my mama be ashamed of me if she knew the kind of fool I'm playing in a public place but just you wait and see how long it takes her to bat an eye she doesn't care how crazy I act. That wasn't her. She really couldn't see me, just like I couldn't see Floyd. I thought invisibility wasn't all it was cracked up to be. I thought Sister Medium Jackson was a pretty nice old girl after all, back in that sawdusty old horse lot they called a carnival in Mississippi, trying to save me five dollars and a hard time.

But mostly I felt all alone and left out. I hated being invisible, even to just one person. I felt awful that I had probably made Floyd feel the same way. I looked at him again and hoped I'd be able to see him, but I couldn't. Still invisible. These are strange times we are living in, I'm telling you.

I wanted out of the Skelly station. I kept looking at the black hole of Floyd, trying to see him in there somewhere, peeking out or something. The blackness didn't have anything to do with his race. Floyd was like watching an eclipse of the moon, except there was no light around the rim. I wondered if anybody who could be invisible could be real, even myself. But that wasn't it. It wasn't a blackness of Floyd's not being there. It was like he was too much there, like a real black hole in space you hear so much about, like he's pure there, not like most everybody else, who are only half-assed here.

I said, "I've got to get out of here. I'm going crazy."

Winston and Floyd said they had to agree.

THE DRIVE to Oklahoma was long and hard, but I didn't mind. I was happy to be in the van, behind the wheel. Sometimes cars would pass us, and one time a child in the backseat caught a glimpse of Floyd and had a conniption fit and his mama and daddy probably wondered what in the world, but mostly nobody even looked. We

drove until it got dark, and we kept on driving.

It was real late. The traffic through Oklahoma City was fierce. Every cowboy and Indian in the state was out driving around in pickups. We kept on going.

After a while we pulled off the road for gas. It was the middle of the night by now, and the station we stopped at was deserted except for us. We pulled up alongside the pumps and I saw the station attendant come out of the little lighted office and head our way. He was just a boy.

I could see that his name was sewn on his shirt, up over the Exxon patch, but I didn't read it. I knew his name already. I have this mental ability. His name would be Jimmy, and his last name would be Fish. I looked around for his daddy, whose name would be Ellis, then I realized his daddy wouldn't be working in a service station. He would be assistant manager of the planing mill.

Jimmy Fish was in his late teens. He was a skinny boy with a big Adam's apple and pretty good teeth. He looked tired and friendly. I watched him come up to the van on Floyd's side. Floyd turned toward him, and they met face to face.

Here's the thing. One time when I was Jimmy Fish's age, I had a temporary job in the complaint department of a big store. It was the day after Christmas and I was making exchanges on Christmas presents that were being brought back. It was a pretty good job, too, tissue paper in your hands all day and the smell of cardboard in your nostrils. Where are you going to get a better job than that? I was sitting framed behind an open window at a counter. I waited on a long line of polite dissatisfied customers. Look up, smile, inspect the merchandise, do the paper work, look up again, next customer. Nothing to it. Then I looked up into the face of a monster.

It was a woman with no face. There was no nose, only a wet hole to breathe through. There were no lips, only teeth. There was a wild caged tongue that was roaring for freedom from behind its bars. There was one eye, wide open and hairless as a fish eye. The other eye was sealed shut. There was no hair, only a badly fitted wig that couldn't hide the fact that she didn't have any ears. There were sermons that might have been preached on that good woman's suffering. No sermons came to my mind. I screamed. A loud, horrible, out-of-control scream.

Everybody in the line of customers hated me for noticing her deformity. The store manager sent me home. People comforted the monster, who couldn't cry because her tear glands had been blown away in the explosion along with everything else. I was not proud of that scream.

I expected Jimmy Fish to scream like that when he saw Floyd. I was wrong. Do you know what



Jimmy Fish said? He said, "Unleaded?"

I wanted to be like Jimmy Fish. I wanted to be anybody but myself. I wanted to blame my crazy mama and daddy for making me so crazy. I wanted to blame Winston and Floyd. I couldn't. Blame had never seemed so out of place. I looked at Floyd and hoped I might be able to see him. I thought if I could see him I wouldn't hate myself so much.

He was still invisible, but he had changed. A dim halo had formed around his eclipsed face, his eclipsed self. I looked at Jimmy Fish. I admired him. I admired his innocence. I admired him for never having lived in Mississippi with a yardful of midgets. I admired these dark Oklahoma plains. I loved the people of this moony land. I knew that nobody in Oklahoma would ever scream into a woman's face, no matter how ugly she was.

I stopped myself. I made a couple of jungle noises, to test the air. I placed my right hand inside my armpit, in my armpit, and blew off a couple of quick labials. It was love. Love is what I was up against. I fought it.

I resisted the easiness of love you feel when you meet a boy in the middle of the night and you think he reminds you of yourself and yet you know he represents everything you could never have been because you had midgets and he didn't and you were once invisible and he wasn't and you couldn't see Floyd and had screamed in a woman's face and earned to eat spaghetti by the slice. I resisted loving anyone for the reason that he was not deformed and that his family was not crazy and that he fit, anyway, into a world of deformity better than I did.

I looked out the window on my side of the van. The boy was pumping gas. I made a sound like a siren at him, and he only looked up and smiled. He made small talk. He told me about a man he saw in "Real People," the TV show, who called himself the Human Siren. I barked at him and snarled at him, and he started telling me the plot of a werewolf movie. I loved him, but I didn't want to love him.

I resisted love because I knew that Jimmy Fish was not the thing I loved. The love I felt had no object. It was flying loose everywhere in a whirlwind, it had no place to light. Jimmy Fish was the first crap of bark it came to and clung to by its toenails. I remembered a time when my mama invited the midgets into our home for dinner.

She served them her unbelievably spaghetti. The midgets thought a cruel joke was being played on them. The father of the little family took a deep breath. He got up, with dignity, from his chair. He wiped the napkin back through the napkin ring and put it beside his plate. He said, "We will go now. I understand now." With his tiny wife and three midget children squeaking and peeping and cheep-

ing behind him, he made his lofty exit and never entered our home again.

I was a child at that table. I felt as embarrassed and as alone and as different as the midgets. I ran out of the house by the back door. I hid in the ditch under the chinaberry tree and watched them. I dreamed of finding words to apologize to them. I never did. I could never bring myself to speak to any of them again. The pipeline was finished and they moved out of our yard.

Winston told me I was on a Journey Through the Land of the Flat Characters. I know what he means now. When Jimmy Fish did not scream, love swept through me like a sudden wind. I resisted love, I clawed at it, I scratched it with my fingernails, I bit off its nose. But it was still there. It felt like the breeze made by the wings of a million bats swarming up out of a cave, squealing. I thought I was one of the bats in the swarm. This was love to me. Behind us a million tons of bat shit on the floor of the cave, and all around us nothing but a blaze of starlight and a million piercing shrill cries to be read with our pained ears like a million tiny white canes with red tips tap-tap-tapping along a sidewalk looking for the curb.

I was in love, but not with Jimmy or Winston or Floyd or myself. I was in love with America. The love I felt—crazy, diffuse, bat-out-of-hell love—was patriotism. I loved America. I loved Exxon. I loved the Ford Motor Company, which built the van that brought me to Oklahoma and this insight. I loved America's golden indifference to deformity. I loved American parents, who could name the ugliest child to be born in modern times with a pretty-boy's name. I loved American consumers, who hated me for screaming at a monster. I loved American politicians, who treated Floyd to a free education at the Rehabilitation Center Trade School for the simple reason that he was ugly as hell and had applied for a scholarship on those grounds. America the beautiful! I almost sang it. Land of the freak and home of the strange.

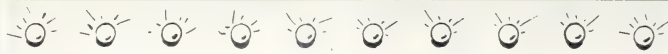
I looked at Floyd. I smiled my brightest smile into his invisibility. Out of his eclipse he said, "Are you okay, man?"

I said, "Floyd, I am proud to be an American!"

Winston looked at me, and then at Floyd. They both seemed worried about me. Winston said, "We're all tired. We're all getting punchy."

I tried to curb my enthusiasm. They were probably right. I probably did sound a little wild. I went inside the station and gave Jimmy Fish Winston's credit card.

I said, "Fine night, Jimmy, just *fine*!" Jimmy didn't say anything. I was sorry I had had to make the noises at him, happy he had not seemed to notice. I wanted to ask about Ellis, but I decided against it.



Maybe people in Oklahoma aren't named Ellis. Maybe there are no planing mills in Oklahoma.

Jimmy Fish handed me the credit slip to sign. He said, "Write down your tag number."

I made up a number and wrote Arkansas in the block marked STATE.

He took the slip and read it over, real careful. I was afraid he would know I was lying about the license number. He didn't care about the number. He said, "Arkansas," reading from the slip. His voice didn't have much expression. He didn't hand back the credit card or my copy of the bill yet. He said, "Whereabouts in Arkansas."

I said, "Hot Springs." Not much of a lie.

He said, "My granddaddy used to live in Arkansas."

I said, "Is that right?"

He said, "Yep."

I took the credit card from him and slipped it into my shirt pocket. He held on to the charge slip. He wanted to read "Arkansas" a little longer.

I said, "Well..." I shifted to the other foot. I said, "Time to get back on the road."

He said, "Texarkana."

I said, "Oh, your granddaddy. I see. Texarkana."

He said, "He's dead now."

I said, "I'm sorry to hear it," and put my hand on the doorknob. I didn't need the receipt slip. And yet when I tried to leave, I couldn't. I looked at the boy, whose name might not have been Jimmy Fish at all. He seemed even younger than before. My patriotism was gone, it seemed silly now. I felt very calm, and I began to see this boy in a way I had not been able to see before. He looked human to me for the first time. I thought, maybe it was not just freaks I saw as less than human. Maybe it was everybody.

He said, "He died last weekend."

For some reason I had thought his grandfather had been dead much longer. I didn't answer right away. I said, "Just this last weekend."

This time he didn't answer.

I said, "Were you able to get over for the funeral?"

He said, "They didn't have a funeral."

I didn't know what to say. His grandfather had been left unburied for a full week.

The boy said, "His house burned down on him. Mama's still hunting bones." He handed me my receipt. He said, "Mama said no use burying him till we've got the whole thing."

I let a second or two pass. I said, "What's your granddaddy's name, Jimmy?" I wasn't reading his shirt. I said, "What did people call your granddaddy?"

He said, "Ellis."

I said, "Nice talking to you," and walked back out to the van.

FLOYD was sitting in the shotgun seat ready to go. Winston was still in place in his chair. I remembered something about my grandmother Sugar. In the last two weeks of her life, she believed a band of Mexican midgets, with sombreros and ammunition belts, was camped in her bedroom. She thought they were playing cards and gambling at the foot of her bed at night. The day before she died she called me to her bed. She said, "They're not really there, Sugar. Don't pay any more attention to them than you have to."

I said, "All right, Sugar."

She said, "Muldrov was my youngest brother. You never knew him. He got a brain tumor and went blind and couldn't see anything but the inside of farm-implement companies."

I said, "All right, Sugar, you rest now."

She said, "It's the same with these midget banditos. They're not here either. No more than Muldrov's tractors and disks and haymows."

I said, "You rest."

She said, "Nothing is real." She said, "Nothing you see is ever really there."

I said, "All right."

She pointed to the Mexicans playing cards. Her voice was tolerant and loving. She said, "They're cute little buggers, but you can't understand a blessed word they say."

I GOT IN the driver's seat. I said, "Winston, this is a long drive."

Winston said, "We're almost there."

I looked over at Floyd. The eclipse had passed. I could see him now, quite clearly. I said, "Floyd, how about you driving for a while."

Winston said, "I want you to drive, Sugar. You're a much better driver than Floyd."

I started up the engine. Floyd got out and walked around to my side anyway. He stood outside the window.

I said, "It's okay, Floyd, I'll drive."

He said, "You start letting a cripple push you around, you're going to have a problem."

I looked out of the car at Jimmy Fish, where he stood in the fluorescent glare. I had never seen such a picture of loneliness. Winston said, "Sugar, you start letting a cripple and a man as ugly as Floyd push you around, you've got a bigger problem."

They were right. It was time. I let Floyd slip behind the wheel and we pulled out. I wished we could take Jimmy Fish with us. I know he wanted to go. But there was no way it could be done.

Sugar Mecklin was not right about one thing, though, my grandmother. People are really there, every one of them. They definitely are. I swear, these are strange times we are living in. □

Phil Shares The Experience

Should transvestites be allowed to adopt Siamese twins?

by Avery Chenoweth

Phil: Let me say that our guests today are Joan and Larry Norm. And our subject today is Murder. You're both murderers, is that right?

Joan and Larry: That's right, Phil.

Phil: And this is your lifestyle, is that it?

Joan: That's correct, Phil.

Phil: And you—how do you feel?

Joan: Great. Never felt better.

Phil: Because?

Larry: Because we've taken control of our lives, Phil.

Phil: And this is Dr. Phyllis Rhodes, whose book is *Criminal Lifestyles: An Alternative*. Doctor, what about this? Isn't killing bad?

Rhodes: Well, it really is a personal issue, Phil, and I think a lot of us have forgotten that.

Phil: But what about America today, Doctor?

Rhodes: I think we see that for as many lifestyles as we see in America today there are persons who live them.

Phil: Okay, Larry, but tell me, why you?

Larry: Well, Phil, with me it was always this feeling from the time I was very young that I was somehow different from the other boys.

Phil: But your violent antipersonalism? How did that come about?

Larry: Well, by accident, really. I was playing with a gun.

Phil: And you didn't know it was loaded, is that it?

Larry: No. He didn't.

Phil: The guy you—

Larry: That's correct.

Phil: But tell me if I'm wrong. You're also a member of the community! You belong to clubs!

Larry: That's correct, Phil, I'm a fascist. We're a small social organization. We exchange weapons, girlfriends, phone numbers, that sort of thing.

Phil: Is the caller there?

Caller: Yes. I just wanted to ask about the doctor's credentials?

Rhodes: I think, Phil, that first we have to say, yes, she is asking a question. And that's an important start. Because so many Americans today forget to ask.

Phil: And our boys in the military, too, is that it? [Applause.] You know, I don't want to sound preachy, but I don't think the housewife of today is going to put up with this a hundred years from now! [Applause.]

Joan: That's how I felt. I just said, "Hey, enough of this crap."

Phil: You mean kill?

Joan: In a major way, Phil.

Rhodes: You know, Phil, we all see this in our lives today in terms of what we see. And I think we're aware of that. It's just the problem of

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coming to deal with it as an issue that's the problem.
[Applause.]

Phil: But, Joan, you had another lifestyle. Tell us a little about that.

Joan: Well, Phil, Larry was working and I was raising the kids.

Phil: And you were frustrated.

Joan: Yeah, 'cause it wasn't easy like it was on TV. 'Cause they really weren't adults yet.

Phil: How old were they?

Joan: Four months and two years. [Murmurs, applause.]

Phil: So there was a lot of muss and fuss. Tell me if I'm wrong. How did that make you feel?

Joan: That's just it. I didn't know anymore. Basically, okay. But I thought there was something wrong with that.

Phil: Right, right. So I guess my question is, how did that make you feel?

Joan: Terrible. I just kept watching "All the Days of My Lives."

hil: But obviously that wasn't all.

oan: No. I watched "The Flintstones," too.
[Applause.]

hil: But I think there is something else here we'll have to understand.

Rhodes: That's right, Phil. I think the important thing we have to remember here is that in terms of television society, which I discuss in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, Joan was exposed to the programs on TV.

hil: So then what happened?

oan: Well, one night I just got sick of it. The crying, the bills, the voices in my head. Everything. I did them in.

hil: You mean you did away with your children, that it?

oan: That's correct, Phil. I let 'em know where stood. [Applause.]

hil: You know, I don't want to ask for more than we have a right to know, and this is a sensitive issue. But how did you do it? Did you get the rope on them?

oan: Oh, no.

hil: Stab them?

oan: No, no.

hil: Shoot them, strangle them?

oan: Nope. Guess again.

hil: I give up.

oan: I just poisoned them in the applesauce.

hil: So they went with a smile, is that it? [Applause.]
to help me understand this. Larry, you're her husband. How did you feel?

Larry: Well, Phil, naturally I wasn't thrilled with what Joan had done. But we sat down and talked it over and decided she had done what she felt like doing.

hil: I bet a lot of mothers feel like that. [Applause.]
but I think we have to make the point here that you're a very understanding husband. A lot of men out there aren't that understanding! A lot of men would have called the police!

Larry: That's what I did. [Applause.]

hil: But why?

Larry: 'Cause I'm a hypocrite. [Applause.]

hil: Is the caller there?

Caller: Hello, Phil? I just wanted to say that you're better than our minister, but today, I'm sorry. I'm turning it off. [Applause.]

Phil: Wait a minute. You think what she did is sick, is that it?

Caller: Well, yes.

Phil: And shouldn't be on TV.

Caller: Uh, no.

Phil: Wait. Stay with me. Would you watch it if it wasn't on TV?

Caller: Uh, no.

Phil: But you would if it was.

Caller: Well, I guess . . .

Rhodes: What I think we have to emphasize here, Phil, is that Joan feels good about what she did. Whereas before she was simply a home executive, now her life has a criminal aspect. And that has given her a sense of direction.

Phil: I don't want to be flip, but straight to the point is what you mean. [Applause.] I mean, I guess what I'm saying here is that you did kill them, we can't forget that.

Joan: Look, Phil, I'm an adult and I don't have to justify my atrocity to anyone.

Phil: But, Doctor, we still don't have all the answers yet. Is that right?

Rhodes: That's correct, Phil. Every year they find out new things and technology gets better, but we still don't know everything yet.

Housewife: All I know is that when my mother raised me I had to grow up. No questions asked. [Applause.]

Phil: So it's a different world, is that it?

Baptist: I haven't heard anyone use the word "respect" yet.

Phil: And your point is?

Baptist: Phil, I was once a little girl but my mother brought me up and now I have two lovely sons. [Applause.]

Phil: But, Doctor, the issue we haven't touched on today—and we all know it's there—is what role Big Business plays in all this. I mean, here we are. We've got taxes. Government. Schools. Jobs. Unemployment. Blacks. Whites. The kids are growing up, we're getting older, there hasn't been a world war in thirty-five years. And a lot of Americans today are sitting there and all they want to know is, "Hey, what time is it?" [Standing ovation.] I know. I know. Please . . . I want to thank all of you for being here to thank publicly. Larry and Joan will be in court soon—we'll watch for that. Dr. Phyllis Rhodes's new book is available at supermarkets everywhere. □



All This and Heaven Too

When it comes to cardinals, we know all about the pomp and little about their circumstances.

by Steve Salerno

ON CHRISTMAS EVE of 1961, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, who was involved in government talks to secure the release of prisoners taken during the Bay of Pigs fiasco, heard that Fidel Castro, knowing that President Kennedy was desperate to have the hostages home for Christmas, had called for an additional \$3 million ransom. Since the Kennedy administration had officially disavowed responsibility for the abortive raid, the money would have to come from private contributions rather than the U.S. Treasury.

Robert Kennedy sought the help of Richard Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston, longtime Kennedy family confidant and fund-raiser par excellence. Through a telephone campaign, Cushing managed to raise a million dollars literally overnight—and in denominations of a thousand dollars or less. To Cushing, considered by many the second most powerful man in Massachusetts after JFK, a million dollars was, so to speak, just another drop in the collection basket.

During his tenure of the Boston diocese, Cushing built: Merrimac, Stonehill, and Cardinal Cushing colleges; a dozen new hospitals (plus additions to existing ones) within and without the Boston diocese; Nazareth and St. Coletta's multimillion-dollar homes for Catholic children; a nursing school; the

Steve Salerno writes for The New York Times, Newsday, and a variety of other publications.

St. Francis Refuge, a men's shelter that fed nearly 800 derelicts daily; a Catholic Boys' Guidance Center; a faithful replica of Assisi's Portiuncula Chapel, using imported marble and other costly building materials; and countless churches, rectories, and convents in individual parishes throughout the diocese. Some of these institutions were paid for in full before they opened, in accordance with the cardinal's desire that they be unencumbered by monthly mortgage costs. Cushing also contributed massive sums to huge and diversified social-service programs for rehabilitating society's misfits, to construction projects in the third world, and to the Vatican (which apparently needed it badly; last year, in a rare public disclosure of finances, the Holy See reported a deficit of over \$26 million). Cushing is also said to have disbursed millions in miscellaneous grants of between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to a slew of charities and organizations.

These funds came from an aggressive and systematic solicitation program that generated—by Cushing's own admission—more than \$35,000 a day, or over \$1 million a month. This was in the mid-Sixties, when \$35,000 would buy four Mercedes-Benzes, whose tanks you could fill for thirty-five cents per gallon.

Unlike many of his peers, Richard Cardinal Cushing harbored few grandiose illusions about his purpose and position within the Catholic hierarchy.

"The only reason I'm getting ahead," he once mused, "is that I bring in the money."

IT is almost impossible to see an archbishop who has decided not to see you. In fact, to get to see any prominent Church official these days, one must first survive the scrutiny of someone from the diocesan office of communications, his function being to weed out muckrakers from the legitimate press. The Church has an all-embracing definition of muckraking, and it is exemplified in the attitude of the Archdiocese of New York, a representative of which informed me that Terence Cardinal Cooke does not favor individual members of the news-gathering community with interviews, although he will convene press conferences of his own choosing "if there is something noteworthy he wants to announce." (Emphasis mine.)

If an interview is granted, the director of communications may elect to sit in. At my talk with Baltimore's Archbishop Borders, Father Geaney—whose public relations credentials are impressive—hovered attentively nearby, taking scrupulous notes and interceding on those one or two occasions when the effusive archbishop appeared dangerously close to divulging what might be called "churchified" information. This reserve is understandable in the face of questions about money and power, both of which archbishops possess in abundance.

Cardinal Cody used to be well known for issuing imperious proclamations, such as "In Chicago, I am the Church." Indeed, the head of a geographical district in the Roman Catholic Church, who is known as the "ordinary" and may be a bishop, archbishop, or cardinal (known collectively as prelates), receives his appointment directly from the Pope, who, according to Church dogma, receives his inspiration directly from God. Thus, in theory, the prelate's authority over his given region, or diocese, is by divine right.

Theoretically, all ordinaries are vested with equal authority under Church law, but several factors tend to favor the ranking bishops of such places as New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. First, major dioceses are normally affluent. Ordinaries from less fortunate areas may have to turn to them when times are tough, or when Church objectives dictate programs too ambitious for the diocesan budget of, say, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Second, appointment to a large metropolitan diocese inevitably carries with it the title of archbishop. An archbishop presides over the group of smaller adjacent dioceses that together with his "home" diocese make up his province. Archbishops are known to have the ear of the Pope and thus can positively or negatively affect a bishop's advancement, even though they are not permitted to pass formal judgment on another ordinary. So most archbishops are treated with cautious reverence by the other, lesser ordinaries of their respective prov-

ince. Third, many bishops are appointed auxiliaries, or assistants, to the ordinaries of major dioceses, although it is church policy that each bishop must have his own diocese, regardless of whether there are any Catholics—or any people—living there. Therefore a bishop possessing a diocese of his own in, say, some remote region of the Himalayas, may, in fact, be relegated to those chores and functions that some urban prelate deems undeserving of his personal attention.

If an archbishop has proven himself to be in singular conformity with a set of present Church ideals, he may be further rewarded by Rome with the honorary designation of cardinal. The position conveys little additional authority in administrative, day-to-day matters, but cardinals do reign over other bishops at the general meetings, or synods, held at the Vatican every so often. And, of course, cardinals elect—and become—popes.

MOST PEOPLE know the name of their local prelate. Glamour prelates, in particular—archbishops and cardinals—enjoy a degree of public recognition that has undoubtedly caused more than one aspiring politician to ponder taking the sacred vows. More important, media attention seems to focus naturally on Church luminaries. At one time there was probably no American face more familiar to readers of the New York press than that of Cardinal Spellman. Spellman's protégé, Terence Cooke, enjoys similar visibility, and so do his counterparts nationwide, their visibility currently increased by, on the one hand, a major scandal, and on the other, a moral crusade.

Cooke is a major figure in the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, which has embarked on an energetic program aimed at defusing U.S.-Soviet tensions and putting an end to military, and in particular nuclear, escalation. Seattle's Archbishop Hunthausen has announced that he intends to withhold half the federal taxes due on his stated earnings because that is the approximate percentage accorded the military, and he will no longer be a party to arms escalation; the Internal Revenue has declared that it intends to collect. In addition, Hunthausen has divested his diocese of some \$85,000 worth of common stock in corporations like Tenneco, which receive substantial military contracts from the government. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops has been vocal but vague in its condemnation of nuclear militarism, but San Francisco's Archbishop John Quinn has become famous among the press corps for greeting prospective interviewers with the chilling remark, "There's a gun pointed at your head right now." (It is explained afterward that the "gun" is not in the room, or in the vicinity, or even the country, but rather in a Siberian missile silo.)

As for the scandal, I asked the director of com-



Helen Dolan Wilson's Boca Raton home, allegedly bought with tax-exempt church funds diverted by Cardinal John Cody of Chicago (see inset).

munications for one West Coast diocese what he thought of all the media interest in the investigation of Chicago's Cardinal Cody, and after being assured that I would not use his name, he furiously described it as "the absolute, unparalleled nadir of journalism."

The Cody story seems simple. As of this writing, a federal grand jury continues to investigate allegations that Cody diverted up to \$1 million in Church funds to Helen Dolan Wilson, a seventy-four-year-old divorcee for whom Cody had also arranged an \$11,500-a-year no-show job at the St. Louis Archdiocese. Mrs. Wilson, whose estimated net worth is uncomfortably close to the amount Cody supposedly diverted, now splits her time between an expensive rented St. Louis apartment and a tidy Boca Raton condo. Hoping to stem the widespread gossip about the exact nature of their relationship, Cody and Wilson have separately maintained that they are cousins, but in actuality they are related only through the remarriage of Wilson's widowed father to Cody's aunt. Interestingly, Wilson, who, according to the *Chicago Sun-Times*, once listed Cody's residence as her summer address, accompanied Cody to Rome for his 1967 induction into the College of Cardinals.

The besieged seventy-four-year-old prelate has chosen to withdraw from public life (the unofficial retirement age for archbishops, even under more salubrious circumstances, is seventy-five). Cody has refused to comment personally on the investigation, claiming, through his attorney, to be accountable "only to Rome and God" and disputing the jurisdiction of civil authorities in the matter. The cardinal's lack of cooperation in the probe has made it difficult—and highly sensitive, in light of the Church/State dichotomy—for the government to conduct its inquiry. Depending on the results of the probe, the Internal Revenue Service may be interested as well.

The complexity creeps in here because of the corporation-sole status of some archbishops. What this means is that all Church property within a specific diocese is owned by the incorporated ordinary. The monies produced by diocesan properties accrue to the ordinary as well. Not all dioceses are corporation sole, but many of the more important ones are, and there is not a single diocese in the United States where the resident ordinary does not have absolute control over the allocation of diocesan assets.

Quite probably no one in the free world enjoys access to as much money, with so few constraints on what may be done with it, as the ordinary. This made me wonder about archbishops, ask questions about their power and their accountability, and what exactly they do in their daily lives.

Politics in the pulpit

THE CHARACTERISTICS that best qualify a man to become an archbishop are those of a consummate politician. Baltimore's Archbishop William Borders talks of the ability "to offer leadership in different areas," to be "an able administrator," to succeed "in advocacy roles"—all of them traits curiously lacking in spirituality. Borders is one of the few archbishops who does not think of himself as omnipotent, and has sincerely endeavored to delegate the responsibilities within his diocese.

"Very seldom do I even think about projecting an image," Borders told me at one point. "I'm interested only in content." My mind flashes back to the Catholic Center in New York, where one small wall in the communications office is devoted to photographs of Cardinal Cooke amongst his flock. Interspersed between shots of Cooke with the likes of Mike Wallace and Ed Koch (not his flock, really, but his mayor, anyway) are photos of the regally dressed cardinal ministering to the common man. No minority has been overlooked, and each minority is represented in a variety of permutations: Cooke with the blacks, Cooke with the elderly, Cooke with the handicapped, Cooke with the elderly black handicapped, and so forth.

A long-standing Catholic precept prohibits Church officials from holding elective office. The rule was reaffirmed by Pope John Paul II two years ago—and much to the chagrin of Father Robert Drinan (Dem.-Mass.), who was forced to relinquish his congressional seat. But, as Archbishop John Quinn's spokesman, Father Miles Riley, told me with amusement in his voice, "There is a difference between holding a political office and being a political person." Consequently, political mingling has always been favored by diocesan leaders, particularly in club-happy Massachusetts. Drinan may have been the first actually to get elected, but Cushing, and before him Cardinal O'Connell, had sown the seeds of Roman Catholic influence. During Cushing's pre-

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eminence, allegations of Church-and-State abuses were especially commonplace, perhaps fueled by the cardinal's close friendship with State Attorney General Francis Kelly.

Politicians, of course, recognize the possible rewards of such contact in heavily Catholic locales: no campaign trip is deemed complete without a visit to the Church potentate in any given region. At least one East Coast archbishop finds the political spotlight irksome. "On St. Patrick's Day, [the politicians] fall all over themselves to get photographed standing next to me," complained the prelate, who, for obvious reasons, requested anonymity. He is similarly beset at dinners, receptions, and other official functions, and has sat for photographers at different times on the same day, embracing political hopefuls and opposing parties.

Most high-ranking members of the clergy recognize that it is never a good idea to become too closely identified with affairs political because, in the words of one priest, "if you're in the headlines too much, it makes the Church-and-State people nervous." So prelates typically maintain as low a profile as is possible (although it is not easy when your agenda may include breakfast with the president of the United States). Given the limitations on political power and the pressures from Rome encouraging a prelate to keep his occasional fits of iconoclasm in check, the contemporary archbishop or cardinal is almost certain to be an ideological conservative who is adept enough at tempering his rhetoric so as to avoid offending moderates. The fire-and-brimstone autocrats of pre-Vatican II are gradually, by attrition, yielding command to a more subdued—if not necessarily more liberal—kind of leader.

Yet contemporary or not, subdued or not, the con-

servation ultimately predominates. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops recently vetoed a suggestion that all references to "men" in prayers, be replaced with a genderless term. The overwhelming majority of Catholic prelates continue to identify themselves with the traditional Vatican posture in such matters as abortion, contraception, clerical celibacy, and the ordination of women. (The cardinal's view of a woman's place in the scheme of things seems to have been summed up by Cushing, who would magnanimously advise women stooping to kiss his episcopal ring to "have your knees for scrubbing floors.") The message to young priests is clear: the who carries a protest banner cannot expect to be handed the bishop's mitre.

Which is why the selection of Humberto Medeiros as the successor to Boston's beloved Cushing came as such a surprise to many ecclesiastics. Medeiros, who is Portuguese, built a reputation as an activist and a champion of novel or unpopular causes. In addition, he represented an abrupt end to a string of Irish prelates, and therefore an improbable choice for stand, Huberman Boston. Nonetheless, Medeiros (now Cardinal Medeiros) has overcome the original skepticism and proven himself to be a highly capable administrator, far more disciplined than Cushing, whose proliferation of spending programs saddled the Boston diocese with a severe cash-flow problem. The new cardinal has seemingly adapted himself to his demure surroundings: according to veteran press-watcher John Coonan of the *Boston Herald*, Medeiros is no longer the headline grabber he was in his impetuous youth.

Having the right connections can be the clincher in a man's quest for the archbishopric. New York's Terence Cooke has shown how helpful it is to es-



John F. Kennedy with Cardinal Richard Cushing, who once ruled \$4 million overhauls on huge prison prisoners taken in Cuba during the Bay of Pigs fiasco.



New York's Mayor Robert Wagner kissing Cardinal Francis Spellman's ring.

establish a cozy relationship with the existing archbishop. Cooke, as auxiliary to the supremely influential Francis Cardinal Spellman, dined nightly with his superior, eventually becoming his closest adviser. Archbishop John McGuire, who was Spellman's logical successor, was passed over at the cardinal's death, largely because of the ailing Spellman's words on Cooke's behalf. The young John Cody also had an intuitive feel for Church politics. Cody, described variously as a "brown-noser" and a "sycophant," used his early relationship with Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis and the Italian Cardinal Montini (who became Pope Paul VI) to skillful advantage later in his career.

Pastoral cares

WHAT, I WONDERED, does an archbishop do all day? What does his career involve? I asked Father O'Brien, director of communications for the Archdiocese of New York. O'Brien's office is on an upper floor of the Catholic Center, a sleek contemporary structure on First Avenue near the Queensborough Bridge, with an exceptional view of downtown Manhattan. The Father himself is tall and trim, an extremely good-looking man with the volatile eyes and overall bearing of an actor.

"Cardinal Cooke rises somewhere between six and six-thirty and has breakfast, after his prayers and Mass, somewhere around seven-thirty. I know for a fact it's a working breakfast—he takes papers with him, and the chancellor eats with him. At breakfast he'll divvy up the work to be taken back here to the office. [The night before] he'll look over the stuff, and mark it for Father So-and-so.

"Mornings are usually reserved for priests' funerals.

He can schedule quick meetings if there's no funeral, or take phone calls, or do a lot of his miscellaneous reading. Or his writing he'll do in the morning."

After lunch, according to O'Brien, the cardinal will arrive at the Catholic Center for a hectic session of meetings and consultations; or he may travel about the diocese on pressing business. Sighing reflectively, O'Brien concludes, "Those afternoons are pretty well taken."

Recreation?

"His work is his recreation," O'Brien said, sounding like a loyal campaign aide. "He's always been pretty well tied to the work he's doing. He seems to enjoy it, to get healthy from it. He does have some close priest friends, and he'll visit them at the rectory. Or he'll go to his sister's—he sees his sister probably once a week. But as far as what I would call 'having a good time'"—O'Brien laughs, shaking his head in obvious admiration for Cooke's diligence, and swallows the rest of the sentence.

The schedule of the average archbishop is indeed crammed. In addition to carrying out administrative duties, on any given day an archbishop may ordain priests within his diocese or take part in the installation of another bishop or archbishop. Ordinaries also retain the rights and duties that traditionally belong to all priests, including performing baptisms, confirmations, and marriages—although in the archbishop's case such functions are apt to be conducted on a slightly exalted level. The parents of children baptized by archbishops are likely to have surnames such as Carey and Kennedy.

When he has the time, a prelate may stop by the site of a diocesan building project—ordinaries love to build things—drop by a local parochial school to address the student body, visit a children's hospital, or attend a meeting of the local library board. Urban archbishops often spend their free time with the city's disenfranchised subculture. Thus we have Manning of Los Angeles spending Easter at a downtown reformatory, and Medeiros of Boston celebrating Christmas Mass behind the walls of a Massachusetts penitentiary. Archbishops are often so rushed that they will change clothes, from full vestments to a priest's basic black, while in transit.

Transit itself is accomplished in a variety of ways. Cardinal Cooke, for example, drives—actually, is driven in—a rented car. "A Ford or a Chrysler," O'Brien adds quickly, in a tone that indicates that what he is really saying is, *not* a Lincoln or a Cadillac. Yet Lincolns and Cadillacs have been the preferred transportation of several ranking prelates. John Cody is conveyed in an imposing black limousine, the vanity plates of which bear the modest inscription ILLINOIS-1. Conversely, the unassuming Archbishop of Baltimore does his own driving in a correspondingly unassuming Buick Skylark. "We're blowing all these myths, aren't we?" his PR man gushed.



Cardinal Cooke points out something of interest to President-elect Ronald Reagan.

RAYMOND HUNTHAUSEN, Archbishop of Seattle, has taken to quoting the sum of \$7,500 as his salary, as part of his crusade against the arms race. Heads of dioceses customarily receive such stipends to pay for personal or secular needs that fail to fall neatly under the umbrella of diocesan spending. To the uninitiated, it sounds ludicrous to begrudge the Hunthausens their paltry \$7,500 paychecks, and crass to take issue with the familiar myth of clerical poverty: "When he dies," said a colleague of Cushing, "we'll throw out his toothbrush and thereby dispose of his estate." However, if you are earning \$7,500 and you are not an archbishop, it is doubtful that you drive a new car (even a Buick Skylark), and even more doubtful that any of your immediate friends do. As a rule, people who earn \$7,500 annually do not have servants to prepare their meals (though they may be servants themselves) or housekeepers to look after their houses or houses for the housekeepers to look after or personal secretaries to handle their correspondence—or a director of communications.

Whatever their trappings of humility, many are only too happy to take advantage of the perks of their position—and the much maligned corporate expense account pales in comparison with the perks of archbishopdom. The perks begin with a house. Richard Cardinal Cushing said of his residence, "Everybody has a key to this joint." The "joint" of which Cushing spoke is a sixty-four-room stone mansion on Boston's Lake Street. Shortly after his 1973 appointment as Archbishop of Washington, D.C., William Wakefield Baum alienated many among the capital's minority middle class by purchasing a half-million-dollar suburban estate for his living quarters. (Baum, called "the cultured cardinal" by *Time*, subsequently gave up the mansion, and has since relocated to Rome, where he is the international su-

pervisor of Catholic education.) Cody of Chicago resides in a comparably imposing Victorian edifice. Even many lesser prelates dwell in buildings that would certainly be considered "comfortable," and probably "substantial."

The nature of one's home address has become a sensitive issue among the clergy. Asked about Cardinal Cooke's personal residence, Father O'Brien's normally affable voice turns suspicious, almost paranoid. He hastily assures me that the building, adjacent to the magnificent St. Patrick's Cathedral, is "over a hundred years old," that "nothing much has been done with it since," that Cooke is accorded "only two small rooms for himself," and that "most of the place is given over to meeting rooms." Clearly, the Cody affair weighs heavily on the Father's mind.

Archbishop Borders's Baltimore residence may be one of the most austere. It is spotless but sparse, almost devoid of any notable color scheme. It is, in fact, vaguely reminiscent of the communications office in the Catholic Center in New York, where bookshelves sag beneath the weight of ancient-looking volumes, and all the furniture is functional. (Sparse or not, the New York Archdiocese—the most affluent in the country—maintains real-estate holdings that, at their last disclosure, in 1972, were valued at \$560 million.)

Cash is not in short supply. Archbishop Baum (whose unlikely surname results from his mother's remarriage to a Jew) was imbued with an abiding love for the graceful life, and was able to indulge his preferences for fine art, opera, and haute cuisine without the apparent help of Household Finance. Several decades before Baum's appointment, Richard Cushing displayed a similarly cavalier attitude toward spending money in his tipping. The Boston cardinal, who liked to refer to himself as "poor," also liked to reward amiable cabdrivers, and others, with nice gratuities. For this impulsive redistribution of the dimes and quarters entrusted to him by Boston churchgoers, Cushing was called generous. In New York, poor people who impulsively use their food stamps to buy steak are called welfare cheats.

If an ordinary's tipping habits seem trivial, the Pilgrimage—the ecclesiastical equivalent of the congressional junket, or fact-finding tour—is less so. At various points throughout their careers, probably all major (and most minor) bishops make pilgrimages—take trips—to faraway places. The chosen sites are generally those of acknowledged religious significance: Bethlehem, Lourdes, etc. Occasionally, ordinaries will embark for destinations of minimal Church presence, citing the need for missionary work. Pilgrimages may be made alone (meaning with staff only), or with other Church and lay dignitaries or with the fortunate students of a diocesan school. In the latter instance, PR-conscious airlines will sometimes donate space on board to accommodate larger groups—but a protracted discussion of who

pays for pilgrimages misses the point. Bishops making pilgrimages are almost certainly sincere in their purposes, and duly awed by the Christian heritage of the places they visit. What matters is that (1) as in the case of junkets, it is nice to be able to get around and see the world while doing one's job, however diligently, and (2) precious few \$7,500 obs involve three weeks, all expenses paid, in Madagascar.

The object of this short exercise in myth-hunting, otherwise known as "vicious innuendo" to those who write editorials for diocesan newspapers, has not been to imply that archbishops are doing something they ought not to be doing—rank, after all, hath its legitimate privileges. Rather, they might simply consider what they do less disingenuously. A little canor—the admission that the job, while tiring and stressful and frequently thankless, does have some very nice fringe benefits—would be refreshing, and helpful to the Church's credibility in such times of scandal.

A HASTILY assembled organization called Concerned Catholics of Chicago has exhorted Cody to come forward in the interest of cleansing the Church's image, but thus far the group's pleas have been ignored. The Pope has been conspicuously silent. Such silence is not unusual in instances of civil impropriety, since Rome has historically felt more threatened by internal, ideological skirmishes than by occasional secular entanglements, and the Vatican is far more likely to vent spleen on a Jesuit priest who gets a little too independent than a Chicago cardinal who runs afoul of the IRS.

In any event, the question at issue is not so much whether one man broke the law as whether the fundamental nature of the Catholic hierarchy makes such transgressions "inevitable." On an overcast Saturday in February, I sat discussing the question with William Borders, Archbishop of Baltimore. Borders, a slightly built, silver-haired man whose toothy grin and casual style put one immediately at ease, is something of an anomaly among archbishops in that he has sincerely tried to delegate power and responsibility within his diocese. "There is no way a bishop can succeed without the cooperation of the priests who have to implement his policies," he says.

"You have to consider motivation," he says. "Why in the world do you have the job in the first place?" He argues that since, relatively speaking, "very few people can become bishops," an individual first entering the priesthood does so without any serious expectation of achieving either wealth or power. The archbishop observes that more venal individuals would opt for a "more profitable, less complicated" career in private enterprise. Therefore anyone who has chosen to undertake God's work must be a man of great moral fiber.



Cardinal Terence Cooke of New York chats with the city's governor and mayor, Hugh Carey and Ed Koch.

Recent events cast some doubt on the archbishop's thesis. In 1978—and in Borders's very own diocese—a state grand jury handed down a sixty-one-count indictment against the Very Rev. Guido John Carcich, former director of fund-raising for the Pallottine Fathers Missionary Society. An audit had revealed Carcich's misappropriation of more than \$2 million, including \$288,000 for his personal use, originally earmarked for missions in foreign lands "to feed and clothe the poor." The money was actually used to buy a great deal of domestic land; in addition, \$42,000 was loaned to the then governor, Marvin Mandel, who was having divorce difficulties. Carcich was convicted, and did his year's penance as an unpaid worker in the Maryland penal system. Shortly thereafter, the Justice Department joined forces with the IRS to investigate the finances of the Pauline Fathers, a group of monks based in rural Pennsylvania. The government sought to determine the whereabouts of some \$20 million in loans and contributions received by the Paulines in the years immediately preceding the probe. Further, in early March of this year, the Rev. Lorenzo Zorza, a Catholic priest attached to the permanent Vatican contingent at the United Nations, was arrested and charged with smuggling stolen art. Published accounts of the affair had Zorza boasting to customs agents of the ease with which he had been able to transact his illicit trade, a trade that could net him up to \$8,000 "commission" on a sale.

These may seem to be isolated incidents involving priests of lowly rank, but with its built-in assumption that priests in any position of authority are free of weakness or fallibility, the budgeting system allows for all kinds of abuses, from corruption to the unfettered exercise of hubris. In the early Seventies, when Chicago's inner city pastors were descending into a fiscal frenzy in an effort to meet teacher pay-



Cardinal Cooke chats with then Republican presidential candidate Richard M. Nixon (1968).

rolls, utility costs, and other basic expenses, Cody was planning a \$4 million Catholic television network. (Perhaps he was inspired by Cushing, who at one point had over fifty radio broadcasts a week filling Boston's airwaves with the Catholic perspective.) And a year after their diocesan subsidies were substantially cut, those same priests were appalled to learn that the single largest entry in the previous annual budget—nearly \$3 million—had gone for remodeling the Holy Name Cathedral.

BORDERS told me that 1982 is a critical period for reform, since work on revising canon law, that body of rules and regulations that formally defines relationships among the clergy at all points along the hierarchical ladder, is approaching its climax.

Late last year, the respected Jesuit publication *America* set forth a fairly comprehensive analysis of the proposed revisions. The opening section of that analysis states: "Teams of canon lawyers have gone over the various sections of Church law and have drafted revisions of them. . . . Their work has been reviewed by a commission of cardinals."

Isn't it a little strange, I asked Borders, for cardinals to have final say in the nature of said reforms? "That's an oversimplification . . . I think it indicates a lack of knowledge."

Later in the same article: "They [bishops] must appoint a diocesan financial board, but they select whomever they wish to serve on it. . . . They can select lay persons as well as priests and would need to name only three people in order to meet the requirements in the law. . . ."

And: "The bishop could also appoint a business manager after consulting with his finance board . . . a close relationship between the bishop and his busi-

ness manager could effectively eliminate the involvement of any other persons in the Church in the financial affairs of the diocese."

To summarize, the bishop appoints the financial board that is to pass judgment on his decisions; the bishop appoints a business manager after consulting with the financial board he has hand-picked.

In describing an amended relationship between bishops and their local priests, *America* reports, "The law would specify several areas where the bishop would have to consult the [priests'] senate. But it would be up to the bishop alone to determine what kind of report could be made of his discussion . . . with the senate." The report concludes, "This effectively eliminates any public accountability for the bishop's actions."

Once again, Borders is unconvinced. "First of all I have never blocked a single story in the diocesan newspaper," he maintains, proceeding to explain how, in the second place, an archbishop who habitually disregarded the wishes of his clerical constituency would "not have anybody's respect."

Yet respect is all that stands to be lost, since, in the absence of heresy, fornication, or comparable outrageousness, there is no provision for removing a bishop from his post. So I asked if the concept of accountability does not mean that something bad can happen to a person who does wrong.

"It depends what you mean by bad," Borders answered. "As far as being secure in position, theoretically I guess that would be true. But as far as security in accomplishing his objectives is concerned, unless a bishop is a leader he's not going to accomplish his objectives. Personal security is not very high on the agenda."

Borders is an informal man who seems, in truth, to be interested only in content. In the course of our long conversation the mood at times became so convivial, so relaxed, that it suddenly seemed permissible to ask if bishops play Pac-Man. Do they eat Big Macs? Send out for pizza?

Borders received the questions in the spirit they were offered. Although he has no interest in computer games or fast food, he will "play a round of golf," or "prepare a meal if I want to" (as opposed to having it prepared for him, as is customary) "Pizza," he adds with a disparaging grimace, "could care less about."

There are undoubtedly other prelates who talk and live without pretension, but their numbers will not increase until the Catholic laity shows a preference for large-scale reforms—and the Catholic laity may well like things to remain just as they are.

"I'm not crazy about all the pomp and circumstance myself," says the pastor of a small Long Island parish, "but a lot of the people seem to like their bishops to live in the grand style. Especially the poor and the uneducated. I suppose it gives them something to look up to," he concludes with a shrug. □

Salazar for bringing democracy to the Iberian peninsula, or mentioned the Nazi accomplishment in generating an exhilarating uprising in the Warsaw ghetto.) Jessica Mitford confessed that she had been a member of the U.S. Communist Party from 1943 until 1958, when she decided that the party was too tied to Soviet policy to be "a force for socialism." That's 1958.

The essence of the argument between Sontag and her critics is neither new nor complicated. From the fact that tyranny prevails in every country where a communist, or Leninist, has taken power, she draws the conclusion that communism is by nature tyrannical. Her adversaries do not exactly dispute the fact, but they reject the conclusion. For them, the main enemy is, has always been, on the Right. The argument raged when Susan Sontag was a girl. More than thirty years ago, magazines like *Partisan Review* and the *New Leader* were saying much the same sort of thing that she said that February evening.

Particularly irksome to several of Sontag's critics was her reference to the *Reader's Digest*, a magazine nobody reads apart from its 30 million subscribers. For someone on the intellectual Left to utter a kind word about the *Digest* was stupefying; the magazine is not merely reactionary, it is also lower middlebrow. It runs articles about pets. And to say an unkind word about the *Nation* at a gathering of so many of its contributors was frightful form. When Norman Cousins, then of *Saturday Review*, committed a similar gaffe at the 1949 Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace put on by friends of the Soviet Motherland, Lillian Hellman, one of the sponsors, chided him: "I didn't know until now that one talked about one's host at his dinner table. I recommend my own method, Mr. Cousins, which is to wait until you get home to do it."

Unlike some of the murkier aspects of Sontag's equation of communism with fascism, the comparison between the *Reader's Digest* and the *Nation* lends itself to documentation. I doubt that either Son-

tag or her critics ever subscribed to the *Reader's Digest*, but perhaps they thumbed through it on twice-yearly visits to the dentist over the decades. Has time colored Sontag's memory, or has it bleached the memories of her late friends? Sontag's question sent me to my local library, where I looked up a sampling of articles about the Soviet Union, Poland, and related matters that had appeared in the *Nation* and the *Reader's Digest*. I chose a smaller, more formative period than the one she suggested: from the end of World War II through the death of Joseph Stalin, when Stalinism was in flower, the Cold War blossomed, and a new regime was planted in Poland.

AS THE WAR ended in Europe, the *Reader's Digest* ran an article by one of its regulars, Stanley High, entitled "An Open Letter to the Russians," which could have been written by Henry Wallace. High sympathized with the destruction wrought on the Soviet Union, announced that "our two nations and two peoples are much alike," and pointed out the mutual need for peace. This sort of wartime popular-frontism soon disappeared in the *Reader's Digest*, as it did in the *Nation*; but in the *Nation* it endured. For the *Reader's Digest*, beginning around 1946, the threat to peace came exclusively from Stalin's Russia; for the *Nation*, it came from German revanchists, British imperialists, residual fascists everywhere, and anticommunists in Washington.

Sontag provoked her Town Hall audience by noting, "The émigrés from communist countries we didn't listen to, who found it far easier to get published in the *Reader's Digest* than in the *Nation* or the *New Statesman*, were telling the truth." After the war, the first of these émigrés was Victor Kravchenko, who defected in 1944 from the Soviet Purchasing Commission in the United States—"a chunk of pure totalitarianism transplanted from Moscow"—and wrote a book called *I Chose Freedom*, two chapters of which

were reprinted by the *Reader's Digest*. Kravchenko, who became a popular witness before congressional committees, described the tight control exercised by the NKVD (now the KGB) over Soviet officials at home and abroad. Today, the details seem mild, as though one were to accuse the Guatemalan military of jostling.

The *Nation*, agitated by the fall of every dissenter in the West, showed little interest in such reports, except to suggest that persons out of favor with the Kremlin were suspicious characters. Writing of the arrest of sixteen Polish leaders by the Russians in 1945, I. F. Stone, who later specialized in skepticism toward official United States government explanations of dubious activities, advised "American progressives to keep their shirts on." After all, Stone wrote in the *Nation*, the Poles were charged with "diversionary activity against the Red Army," which "had cost the lives of more than a hundred Army officers and men." A couple of the Poles might have been anti-Semites and fascists. And anyhow, Stone reported, they may simply have been taken to Moscow to negotiate. Their subsequent trial (with confessions) was in fact part of Moscow's campaign to discredit the London-based Polish émigré government, while the Kremlin's preferred Poles were installed in Warsaw. Stalin and other communist leaders in Europe enjoyed a benefit of the *Nation's* doubt never accorded the likes of Adenauer and de Gaulle. Here is Izzy Stone, scourge of American official duplicity, looking back in 1948 on the Stalin-Hitler pact that did in Poland. "When the full story is told, it will be seen that Stalin's motives were those of a Russian ruler seeking to protect his country in a very treacherous situation." When Soviet control of Eastern Europe was well consolidated, opponents of the new order were dismissed as reactionaries, if not fascists. In 1949, Freda Kirchwey, the *Nation's* editor, expressed her anger over American support for "small groups throughout the Soviet area" that stood to profit by preventing "a revolution that is long

overdue." What price solidarity?

Kravchenko offered *Reader's Digest* readers an early glimpse into the Gulag: "I know from extensive personal observation that most of the war industry used slave contingents and that in dozens of plants such coerced labor was the principal or sole reliance." From time to time, the *Reader's Digest* ran other reports from Russian emigrés, with titles like "I Don't Want My Children to Grow Up in Soviet Russia." They all described life in Russia as difficult and dreary for both body and mind. That was not what readers of the *Nation* were learning from Alexander Werth, the magazine's man in Moscow. In a period when the *Nation* was conveying wishfully gloomy predictions about the failure of the Marshall Plan, Werth was assigned to report on "the gradual transition to complete Communism now under way in Russia." He found the Russian people working together enthusiastically to rebuild their devastated land. On May Day, 1947, he reported, "These holiday crowds in Moscow seemed to have confidence in the future as far as the country's internal progress is concerned. . . . Altogether, there is a general feeling that with respect to consumer goods and food, Russia's difficulties will soon be over." His dispatches were upbeat to the point of upchuck. In 1951, he reported: "The people, especially the young men and girls one sees in the streets, are very nicely dressed, and the girls take great care of their hair and fingernails, which they didn't do before. Hairdressers and manicurists are among the busiest people in Russia now. . . . I heard more gay laughter in the streets of Moscow than in any capital in the West."

In a paragraph that might have been a comment on Alexander Werth's mode of reportage, John Foster Dulles, not yet a policymaker but already an evangelist, noted in the *Reader's Digest* in 1946: "Some, while perceiving the intolerant and ruthless aspects of Soviet policy, cling to the hope that these aspects are only local or temporary." Werth was not one to use words like "intolerant and ruthless"

about the Russians, but he did report from Moscow that year that "Literature, the cinema and the theater have all been mobilized for what is called the education of the masses. What is taken abroad as a long-term policy is often in fact relatively short-term policy dictated by conditions and dangers existing during the present transition period."

EVEN during the endless transition, the *Nation* was not a one hundred percent as far as the Soviet Union was concerned. "Undesirable tendencies" were often mentioned and lamented; even Alexander Werth found the approved literature boring. But the magazine's own tendency, perhaps in reaction to the increasingly confrontational language being heard in places like the high-circulation *Digest*, was to remind readers of Soviet "insecurities," to call on Washington to understand Moscow's reactions to a threatening world, and to demand that the West behave in a forthcoming way, like a social worker dealing with a patient who may do odd things now and then but means well.

J. Alvarez Del Vayo, the *Nation's* European editor, was the maestro of the insecurity theme. He traced U.S.-Soviet difficulties to the death of President Roosevelt, who had had an understanding with Stalin on the need to resist the revival of "reactionary intrigues." Like Werth, he saw a much brighter future for the East than for the West, if only the warmongers did not prevail: "A socialist state, possessed of the vigor and imagination of a regime only thirty years old, is capable of far greater resiliency than the Western countries, saddled with a decrepit economic system and a tradition of striped-pants diplomacy." Del Vayo makes peculiar reading at a time when only Western banks stand between Poland and starvation.

The *Reader's Digest*, meanwhile, was taking an apocalyptic line. "Throughout the entire earth," cried William Bullitt in 1947, "Stalin's forces are on the offensive and the democracies are in retreat." A steady

diet of the *Reader's Digest* could cause indigestion. The magazine's warning drums heightened the beat of the national pulse. There were no calls for holy war, exactly, but a Salvation Army spirit resounded through its little pages. The *Reader's Digest* was no more given to making nice distinctions among left-wing movements than the *Nation*; whereas the latter welcomed them all, the former wrote them off as Soviet tools. Issue after issue delivered the summons for greater American strength, military and moral, to meet the Soviet menace. Happily, neither our government nor the Russians proved as aggressive as *Digest* readers must have feared or hoped.

The *Digest's* up-and-at-'em view of the U.S.S.R. was encapsulated by William Henry Chamberlain in an article reprinted in 1947 from the prematurely anticommunist liberal journal the *New Leader*. Chamberlain attributed international tensions to the "fatalistic" belief of Russia's rulers in inevitable conflict between communist and anticommunist countries; the bad faith of the Kremlin, as demonstrated by broken treaties; the Soviet Fifth Column, plotting tirelessly to undermine other regimes around the globe; and the closed Soviet society, which was preventing America from bringing its case to the Russian people. Criticism of Washington was rare in the *Digest*, and any dictator being annoyed from the Left could count on a consoling word. In a passage that resembles recent State Department releases, Chamberlain wrote: "... the present regimes in Greece and Turkey (and China), whatever their defects, are far more capable of evolutionary progress than the systems which would prevail in a Greek or Turkish Soviet republic."

Whatever the defects of that prophecy, it was no more outlandish than the dreamy prospects for Eastern Europe that rose like mist from the *Nation's* pages. Freda Kirchwey exulted as the Greek-Turkish situation warmed up, "Where Moscow's wish is law today, the overall effect of Russian control has been to wipe out established prewar relationships

and to smash fascist power." Not every *Nation* contributor was entirely happy with the regimes being set up in the East, or with every aspect of Soviet society. In 1947, Margaret Marshall, the magazine's literary editor, used the phrase "totalitarian communism" to describe what was going on behind what the *Nation* was loath to call the Iron Curtain, and expressed the hope that Western socialism might give Soviet communism "lessons in civil rights, in freedom of thought and inquiry." Marshall, along with a few others, like the critic Clement Greenberg and contributing editor Robert Bendiner, constituted an anti-Stalinist cadre at the magazine. But the care of the Soviet Union was left mainly to Kirchwey, Werth, and Del Vayo, who had little to report about totalitarian communism. Greenberg left the *Nation* with a bang in 1951, charging, in a letter that was published by the *New Leader* after it was turned down by the *Nation*, that Del Vayo "has defended every step in Soviet policy and, just as unflinchingly, criticized or evaded every argument and step opposed to that policy." Bendiner, whose irrelevant pieces on communists and fellow travelers Kirchwey had tolerated, quit when the *Nation* sued Greenberg and the *New Leader* for libel. And in 1953, Margaret Marshall was fired after twenty-four years. She said, in parting, "I have not believed the policies of the *Nation* for the past few years are the policies America's oldest liberal weekly should have." There were two *Nations*, divisible.

Kirchwey did show concern over the wave of anti-Semitism that rolled out of the Kremlin in the late 1940s, and over the show trials in Prague in 1952. But in the latter case she could not resist putting on her comment a spin that got her back into the *Nation*'s orbit: "Americans should read the accounts of this trial with care, and having read them, should then reread the testimony of the professional informers and denouncers, the ex-traitors, the self-confessed perjurers and espionage agents who have testified before the various Congressional committees

in this country to see if they can find a parallel or any similarity between the two witch-hunts."

Remember the joke about the Moscow subway? An American visitor, having admired the beautiful marble and the chandeliers, points out to his Soviet guide that they have been waiting forty minutes for a train. The Russian replies, "And what about the Negroes in the South?" The art of diverting the eye from East to West has passed down the generations like three-card monte. The Town Hall rally, according to Ralph Schoenman, an organizer, was designed "to show how demands for workers' control and workers' democracy could be applied to the condition of labor in America, and above all, to deny to cold warriors the support of a workers' mass movement in Poland, which they would be the first to crush in the U.S., just as their clients are doing in Turkey and El Salvador."

AS THE GLOW of the millennium began to fade after the war, *Nation* writers did their darndest to keep it bright. Harold Laski, the political scientist, sometime chairman of the British Labor Party, and an occasional contributor, was one of those who found a ray of light in the gathering shadows:

It [the Stalin regime] is a dictatorship. It is a hard regime. It has made vast mistakes and blunders that are difficult to distinguish from crime. But whatever the temporary deformation, its zeal for science, its enthusiasm for education, the great avenues of opportunity it has opened to its own people, the elevation of its subject nationalities, the new status it has given to women, the suppression of anti-Semitism, the absence of a color bar—all these seem to me proof that within the framework of the dictatorship there lies the purpose of building in Russia a democratic way of life. The stumbling block is its leaders' sense of insecurity on the international plane. If we could convince them...

Each magazine had its anticommunist liberal contributors, useful for giving tone to the company, but the *Nation* never opened its pages to pieces like "Tyrannies Must Fall," by Alan Nevins, which the *Digest* carried early in 1952. Nevins stated, without deference to anybody's insecurities: "In Poland the workers have been dragged into trade unions which are dominated by the Politburo. Labor leaders who stood for freedom and decent working conditions have been ruthlessly exterminated; some have been executed, some have died in Russian jails." And, at a time when the *Nation* was still holding out the hope for liberalization in the East as a consequence of a show of fraternity from the West, Nevins predicted that the changes were more likely to come from below: "A revolt in one of the satellites may spread to several or all of them, and bring about a sharp modification of policy in the Kremlin. The Poles, the Chinese and the Czechs in particular will not forever draw the Soviet chariot."

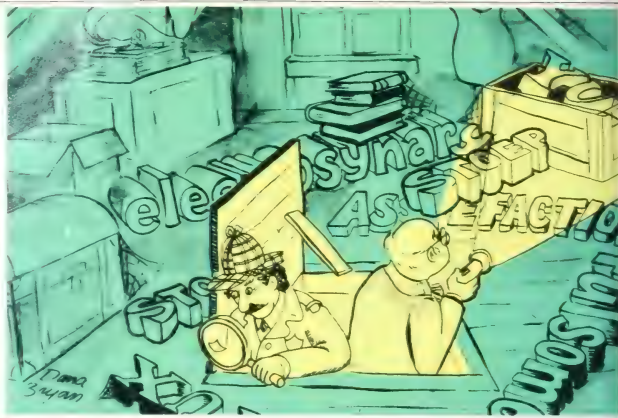
In ridiculing Sontag's performance at Town Hall, Garry Wills observed that what she called the *Reader's Digest's* "grasp of communist realities" included support for colonialism, Chiang Kai-shek, and local tyrants everywhere. Granted, the *Digest's* moralistic, simplistic, corny anticommunism was no magnet for intellectuals or guide to perplexed liberals. The pride of Pleasantville was politically benighted. But Wills was allowing himself to be carried away by the spirit of the occasion. Everybody knows that Sontag is no more a friend of Chiang or Diem or Batista than anti-Stalinists in the old days were friends of the Czar. It was always a conceit of fellow travelers that the choice was between them and reaction. The *Nation*, although more devoted than the *Digest* to the little guy outside the Soviet bloc, was just as moralistic, simplistic, and corny. The question that Sontag posed is whether the drippy *Digest* offered a truer picture of Soviet communism after World War II than the postcards of a cheery people, a vigorous econ-

omy, and a dedication to peace on show week after week in the *Nation*. In doing so, she was carrying forward a dispute between anticommunists and anti-anticommunists that has divided the Left for most of this century.

The character of the *Nation* during Stalin's reign did not escape notice on the Left. In his recent book *The Truants*, William Barrett reprints from *Partisan Review*—then anti-Stalinist Marxist—a 1946 editorial, "The Liberal Fifth Column," in which he charged that the *Nation* was part of a "powerfully vocal lobby willing to override all concerns of international democracy and decency in the interests of a foreign power." Barrett explains why he has reprinted the piece: "Younger friends to whom I have shown the editorial have expressed amazement that things seem to be at the same pass now as thirty-five years ago."

Not exactly. There cannot have been many people at Town Hall on Sontag night who look to Moscow as the fount of their radicalism, and I haven't heard anyone in New York call Lech Walesa a counterrevolutionary. But the faithful do seem to need a place to which their faith can attach itself. For many years, far longer than mere reason can justify, Moscow was the Mecca of the world's Marxists. More recently, worshipers have turned their eyes toward China or Cuba or Nicaragua; some Americans even found hope in the Ayatollah's Iran, and not long ago Susan Sontag carried on about Hanoi in a way that must mortify her today. Is there much doubt about where most of these seekers would have looked in the old days? Even now, many cannot bring themselves to say straight out that the Kirchwey-Del Vayo-Werth line was devilishly askew, yet they have the effrontery to claim Solidarity as their own, like collaborators trying to pass as victims after the camp gates have been broken down. The *Nation* may have been more enlightening than the *Reader's Digest*, in general, but when it came to "the realities of communism," *Digest* readers were more accurately served. □

BOOKS



The Word Police

by Hugh Kenner

Slugging it out with the language pundits.

OLD MAGAZINES get piled in the attic; likewise old words. The word attic we call a dictionary. (Might "Yux," for "hiccup," come in handy again? Johnson listed it in 1755. The *Oxford English Dictionary* has mislaid it.)

The earliest dictionaries were no more than lists of hard words. It was only in the eighteenth century that "cat" and "dog" joined them in the alphabet; not that anyone needed to look up "cat" and "dog."

No, the new-model dictionary, most famously Johnson's, reflected an interest in *surveying* the language, the way you can survey anything you can lay out on sheets of paper, and it wasn't thought of until the new printing industry whetted an appetite for tidy overviews.

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(There had been printing, yes, since about 1450. But the *industry*, highly organized and screaming for copy, was two centuries getting itself together and assembling its public.) Lo, on this paper map, the World. Lo, on these trim bound sheets, the Word of God. Lo, between these rectangular covers, the English Language! Behold now "cat," "dog," "that," "which," displayed in the same alphabetized list with "eleemosynary" and "assuefaction."

One effect was to dignify "that" and "which." They even got distinguished, by a process so subtle it eluded Samuel Johnson, whose second synonym for "that" is "which." The distinction resembles the way theologians tell the eighth order of angels from the ninth, and a woman who used to read copy at *The New Yorker* is alleged to be the only person alive who really understands it. (*The New Yorker* is notoriously finical, and its failure to close a parenthesis some months ago got

widely read as a Sign of the Last Days.)

Collecting signs of the Last Days—the misattached “hopefully,” the misapprehended “nubile,” the misspelled “holistic”—is heavy work for John Simon (*Paradigms Lost*) and Edwin Newman (*A Civil Tongue*), a mere sideline for William Safire, whose weekly column “On Language” stays pretty cheerful, so entertaining does he find the ways of speech.

Sorting his mailbag, Safire can be a delight, or letting us listen while he telephones. His new hardback collection, *What's the Good Word?*,* preserves a conversation with Miss Paulette Dufault (say “doo-foh”) at Elizabeth Arden, who explained a product line they called “Millennium.”

“‘We were aware that “millennium” is spelled with two n’s,’ said Miss Dufault in a moist, creamy-soft, permanently youthful voice. ‘We spelled our product with one n because it would be a trademark.’ When that was met with suspicious silence, she added tonily, ‘And we liked the look of it.’”

So we discern an odd fact about written syllables, words shifted from voice to print, from time to space. A word in space is no longer like wind but like real estate: somebody can own it. Xerox is owned. Somebody once told me the fee of the classics instructor who coined “Xerox” (from the Greek *xeros*, dry): as I recall, about \$200. Kool and Arriid are owned; but no more than you can own a public bypath can you own a mere Webster word.

SAFIRE can listen as well as read. He hears New Yorkers saying “take a haircut” and “play piano,” also “No problem,” when others would say “You’re welcome.” They ask for “change of a dollar,” and in Brooklyn sit on something called a “stoop,” which we’re told is from Dutch *stoep*, steps plus porch. New York, in short, is like any linguistic community in staying equilibrated like a biological community. The local heritage

(Dutch, Yiddish) prompts mutations, the need for viability constrains selection, and eventually visitors discern a species.

Such localisms have their charm, like the aardvark, and bother no one. What gets bothersome for Safire is a usage not referable to any community save that of AP and CBS consumers. “‘That was a fulsome answer,’ said Ronald Reagan to a questioner . . . last month; ‘I hope you don’t think I was filibustering.’”

Aha, cries Safire, Reagan is echoing a widespread misuse. “‘Fulsome’ is related to ‘foul’; one meaning is ‘loathsome,’ or at least ‘offensive.’ A related meaning—and here’s where the confusion starts—is ‘excessive.’ The frequently used phrase ‘fulsome praise’ does not mean ‘lavish praise’; rather, it means ‘praise so excessive that it is obviously insincere and fawning.’” By that showing, if Reagan described his own answer as “fulsome” he was being excessively candid. But of course that’s not what he meant.

And Aha, cries Jim Quinn in *American Tongue in Cheek*,* who sees “fulsome” as a favorite worry bead of the “Pop Grammarians,” the likes of Safire, Simon, Newman, Theodore Bernstein. These moralists never look back past the late nineteenth century, and so don’t see what is plain from the *OED*, that present “misusage” simply returns “fulsome” to its original meaning, “abundance,” unchallenged from ca. 1250 till 1583. The association with “foul” was merely “ignorant,” and the meaning Safire leans on, “gross or excessive, offensive to good taste like flattery,” got established as late as 1633.

Leaving Jim Quinn to smack his lips after the kill, we may turn to Maxwell Nurnberg’s *I Always Look Up the Word* “Egregious,”** where “fulsome,” we’re told, is “frequently misused.” For “it no longer means full or abundant; it now has only the unfavorable meaning of excessive or overdone to the point of being in bad taste or even at times nauseating.” But for whom does it

“no longer mean” abundant? For consultants of a book such as Nurnberg’s. However, when he says “frequently misused,” he can only mean that for a lot of speakers, such as Ronald Reagan, it *does* mean “abundant,” and not in the sixteenth century but right now. Yes, it does, and you can say “alas” if you like, reflecting that if you use it in Safire’s and Nurnberg’s sense you’ll be misunderstood by Reagan and maybe by Quinn.

QUINN’S deadly arsenal is the *OED*, from which he arms his demonstrations that the Pop Grammarians don’t know what they’re talking about. Sometime in the past of the language, he can generally show you, the misuse they’re moaning about was current usage; also it was good enough for Shakespeare, Austen, Thackeray . . . on and on.

This is meant to comfort just plain folks, but it ignores such considerations as that (a) Shakespeare the playwright was generally reproducing what he heard, not setting norms to write by; (b) evolution can produce distinctions, as between “oral” and “verbal,” which it seems retrograde to discard, never mind that Pepsy and Swift had not heard of them. Unhappily, there’s no way to preserve a distinction mankind is apparently agreeing to ignore except among members of a subcommunity. This subcommunity is as distinct from the majority as readers of *Harper’s*, for instance, are distinct from readers of *TV Guide*. If you read both, which is quite possible, you are skilled at shifting between dialects, a skill possessed by most readers and speakers of English today.

So Jim Quinn’s historical citations will only annoy the usage pundits. Now and then he overreaches himself, as when he catches Edwin Newman, his especial *bête noire*, “our linguistic Chicken Little,” wishing we’d stop misusing the word “rhetoric.” Writes Newman, “Rhetoric does not mean fustian, exaggeration, or grand and empty phrases. It means—it meant—the effective

* Pantheon, \$11.95.

** Prentice-Hall, \$9.95 and \$5.95.

* Times Books, \$15.95.

use of language and the study of that use." Quinn jumps to the *OED* and finds "rhetoric" applied to false and empty phrases as long ago as 1562. Thus Newman is a fraud, and any dictionary "could have told him the real meaning of 'rhetoric.'"

"Real," what is real? "Rhetoric" meant the third part of the classical curriculum—Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, the *Trivium*; the study of Words, the study of Reasoning, the study of Words Deployed. If as late as 1562 they had noticed that Words Deployed could yield false and empty phrases, do not be surprised, but also do not call that "the real meaning of 'rhetoric.'" A general rule: beware of any statement containing the phrase "the real meaning." There is no reality to which it can point.

The best the *OED* itself can ever record is the state of literate usage at the time it went to press, and that time extends from 1884 for its first letters to 1928 for its last. Also, since its sources were wholly written, it had no access to spoken usage at all except through the practice of novelists and playwrights.

WHY DO word books tumble from the presses in such plenty? I have at my side a box of perhaps twenty, titles like *Words Fail Me, What's Happening to American English?*, *The Dictionary of Diseased English*, not to mention a pair by the "Underground Grammarian" Richard Mitchell, *Less Than Words Can Say* and *The Graves of Academe*. They sell, and authors come back with second helpings. And Safire's column of linguistic chit-chat is syndicated.

A few are meant for use. For elegant definitions of what computer hackers mean by *firmware* or lawyers by *battery* (which need not batter) you'll want Don Ethan Miller's *The Book of Jargon*.* For a better-informed account of how words come and go than the pop grammarians can offer, try Charlton Laird's *The Word*.** From the

rest you will get mostly entertaining tidbits, with now and then an explosion of choice invective. The Underground Grammarian enjoys roasting "educators" slowly, and draws a crowd the way executioners used to.

Even so, why are word books such a popular genre? Observe, to start with, that the phenomenon is not new. On the *Study of Words* and *English Past and Present*, a doubleheader by Richard Chenevix Trench, was a sturdy seller in the old Everyman's Library. From the 1850s, when they were first delivered as lectures, these two grab bags of etymological lore stayed in print for a century. So part of an answer is that words seem to interest everyone who can read.

Jim Quinn notes hands getting wrung throughout most of these books, and proposes a starker explanation: "Despair sells." He may be right. "There is hardly an aspect of American life that has not made the best-seller lists after somebody was lucky enough to discover it was in the last stages of decline."

Quinn is not above employing this motif himself, since according to him a very last stage of decline is the rise of the Pop Grammarians to scare everybody. His publishers reinforced this thesis by commissioning a foreword from Benjamin DeMott, that veteran truffle-hound of elites to decry. "Ignorant," "repressive-authoritarian," "mean and humorless," are woof-woofs by which DeMott decries Safire & Mitchell & Newman & Simon & Bernstein & Co., though he partially (and rightly) exempts Safire. I've a dog named Thomas whose routine denunciations can ring more heavily, but this Chicken Little undeniably has his nose to the ground.

So you can sell a falling sky? That may be part of it. But Safire's skies seldom fall, and as for Willard Espy, author of *Have a Word on Me** and *Say It My Way***:

* Simon & Schuster, \$13.95.

** Penguin, \$5.95.

found seventeen ways to misspell "Appalachian."

Whatever is happening meets a linguistic need, affirms Espy; even the Psychobabble Cyra McFadden recorded in *The Serial*: "Kate told her friends how happy she was that she and Harvey had decided to split for a while, because it would give them a chance to get clear, and because her philosophy, like Sartre's, was that everybody was ultimately responsible for his own number." This portends not a falling sky but a social fact: "We see ourselves as caught up in a process of incessant readjustment to new conditions. When the need passes, so will the jargon." Gloom and sorrow cheerfully dismissed, Espy turns to his real business, entertainment. Only two English nouns, he will tell you, join the Latin suffix "-ation" to a non-Latin stem; they are "flirtation," coined by the jocular Colley Cibber in 1718, and "starvation," devised as an orator's projectile in 1775.

He will tell you a lot more like that, and you can read it the way you eat peanuts, in no special order. "Chevron" comes, via French, from the Latin *capra*, goat; when goats lock horns we see inverted *V*'s. *Picus* is Latin for woodpecker, whence *piccare*, to peck, later to jingle; and in Provence they named a little jingling coin *picaïoun*, whence Louisiana's "picayune." A bulldog is not named for a bull, but from French *boule*, ball, for the roundness of its head.

ON AND ON; if you see the resemblance to a peanut jar you glimpse one more explanation for the copious supply of word books. They need not be read from beginning to end. Good bedside books for the guest room, they can be paged through at random, with no residual guilt about wasting them. Americans, Russell Baker once said, like to find ways of combining an agreeable time with something improving. He instanced singing hymns at the seashore, an analogy to recall the moral strain so blithely lacking in Espy, fitfully apparent in Safire,

* Macmillan, \$16.95.

** Simon & Schuster, \$12.95.

dominant in Simon, Newman, Mitchell, who devise hells for other people, not for their readers.

Other people? The Media mavens, Madison Avenue, all Watergate spokesmen: they it is who are sawing loose the props of the sky. We are free to drift off to sleep wishing them bad cess and trying to remember what it was about "quark."

"Quark," Espy tells us, a physicist's abstraction, got its name from a coinage of James Joyce's in *Finnegans Wake*, and amid his pride over spelling the title correctly (no apostrophe!) he proceeds to misquote the line. "Quark," says Jim Quinn, "first appeared in *Finnegans Wake*, but the inventor of the scientific term, Murray Gell-Mann, is frequently quoted as saying that he did not know that at the time. He just wanted a funny-sounding word for a funny-acting particle."

Next, a look into Jeremy Bernstein's *Science Observed** suggests that Quinn is not only misspelling Gell-Mann but saying the thing that is not. Gell-Mann, it was possible to read in *The New Yorker* as long ago as July 18, 1977, was a *Wake* fan of twenty-four years' standing when he named the quark in 1963. Joyce's phrase is "Three quarks for Muster Mark!" (spoken by seagulls), and the word appealed because quarks come in threes.

Bernstein next divigates into guesses about where Joyce got the word. *Quark* is German for cottage cheese; did some sign in Zürich, "Drei Mark für Muster-Quark," three marks for a model cottage cheese, suggest a transposition of the nouns . . . ?

That is where Jim Quinn might have made his routine pounce, and we can only guess that by the time he'd written 177 pages of his book his *OED* had been repossessed. For Quinn's bible, the *OED*, was as far as Joyce needed to look for a verb that means to make a croaking sound: example, "Rooks cawing and quarking." It was just the word to be uttered by his circling seagulls.

There, that's something settled. Sweet dreams. □

* Basic, \$16.95.

BEFORE



AFTER



Americas' Lost Liberal

by Alan Brinkley

The Souring of Teddy White, 1956-1982.

America in Search of Itself: The Making of the President, 1956-1980, by Theodore H. White. Harper & Row, 480 pp. \$15.95.

EARLY in the evening of October 31, 1980—Halloween night, four days before the presidential election—Theodore H. White sat in his brownstone on the east side of Manhattan watching the evening news on television. The news included coverage

of the last stages of the Reagan and Carter campaigns; rumors of a deal to free the hostages in Iran; new evidence of economic troubles. But one report in particular caught his eye: the story of a Halloween celebration by a crowd of New York gays dressed in skull-and-skeleton costumes. "As I watched," White recalls, "it occurred to me: no one

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has rung my bell. Twenty-five years earlier, when I first moved into the house in New York, little children would ring the bell, shouting, 'Trick or treat.'" Now the children were afraid to walk the streets. "So I had no need for the candies and fruits I had bought; the city has changed, the country has changed, and Halloween as shown on television was celebrated by the homosexuals."

Where did it all go wrong? What happened to the simpler, happier days when children walked the streets unafraid, when homosexuals did not party in the streets, and when Theodore White could spend Halloween handing out peanut-butter cups to his neighbors instead of gloomily pondering the state of the world?

America in Search of Itself is his effort to find the answer, the final and culminating volume of the remarkable Making of the President series, but a book in which the presidential campaign is a distinctly secondary concern. Twenty years ago, White explains, he had begun the series, intending to chronicle six successive national campaigns. "At the end there would be an account of twenty-four years of passage of power in American politics, telling how we got from there to here. This time I wanted to add it up." The election of 1980, therefore, has become less an event in itself than a "climactic episode in a much longer period of time than I had attempted to write of before." It has become the occasion for examining the question of how America "lost its way."

For a nation to have strayed from its path, of course, it must once have had a path. And to White, that path was clearest and most solid in what he calls the "Old Country"—the America of the 1950s. Politics operated then in stable, comprehensible patterns. Society was tranquil. The nation had a sense of shared purpose, a commitment to unity. It was, in short, an era in which a vibrant, all-encompassing political center governed American life. Problems and disagreements plagued the nation, to be sure; but there was a broad consensus on how best to solve those problems and resolve

those disagreements. This happy era culminated in 1960 with the election of John F. Kennedy—who brought youth, vigor, and the promise of active leadership to the nation, but who, when he pledged to make the country "move again," meant only a more rapid journey down a familiar course.

Above all, the America of the Old Country operated on the basis of certain fundamental premises: that all citizens were entitled to equal justice and opportunity under the law; that merit would be rewarded; that every individual could, by virtue of his own talents and energies, rise to whatever level he was capable of attaining. Thus, the son of Jewish immigrants in a poor neighborhood of Boston could gain admission to an elite public school, win a scholarship to Harvard, and go on to become one of the most successful journalists of his generation.

BUT even in the 1950s, those who cared to look could see the storm clouds gathering. For there were flaws in this democratic structure that could not go untreated forever. There was the pervasiveness of racial discrimination, which deprived American blacks of their proper access to opportunity. There was sexism, which consigned women to subordinate roles and barred them from meaningful participation in national life. There was a whole range of groups, "lost in the corridors of the Old Country," waiting to be led into the light. And it was there—in the effort to solve these remaining injustices—that America's decline began.

It all seemed so simple at first. Where discrimination existed, the nation would eliminate it. Where bars to opportunity survived, society would remove them. Blacks, women, Hispanics, all the accumulated minorities lining up for their crack at the American dream, would be permitted access to the competitive arena, there to stand or fall according to their abilities in the same way that all other Americans had to stand or fall. The vital center

would survive; it would simply expand to make room for more participants. That was the heady vision in the early 1960s, when John Kennedy seemed to prove that "men were masters of forces," that "all things were possible for men determined in purpose and clear in thought." But that vision did not endure.

By the mid-1960s, the idea of equality had been redefined, perverted. Liberal Democrats, in particular, had begun to spout new slogans—"Participation" and "Entropy." Deprived groups were now not only to be brought to light but "to education, then to benefits or entitlements. This idea was to change all political realities, for it led to the definition of groups, by age and sex, by color and race, and each group spawned other groups, splintering the country instead of opening it." Soon the clamorous demands of these new and favored *constituencies*, each wanting special treatment on its own terms, were assailing the shared values of the political center. By the late 1960s, those values lay in ruins. The center had not held.

The argument is a familiar one. In its essential elements, White's scenario differs little from the now conventional neo-conservative lament. America is in decline; its natural leaders have lost the will to defend its basic values; misguided liberal ventures have led the nation astray. And like other such jeremiads, this one contains not only a considerable amount of sensible and astute analysis, but a large measure of bitterness and resentment as well. This is not simply a story of mistakes and misfortunes; it is the tale of ideals betrayed, of principles abandoned, and of the rise of alien, hostile forces in American life that poison the present and threaten the future.

Perhaps, for liberals of the World War II generation, it was inevitable that it should end this way: in sour recriminations against a society that seems to have rejected their values. Seldom has a generation come of age so imbued with optimism, so certain of their nation's righteous-

ess, so confident of their own moral claim to leadership of their society and the world. White himself, in introspective moments, looks back bemusedly on the hubris of his era. There was, he claims, "only one overpowering beginning" of our mes—"the Year of Victory, 1945." From that moment, "all things owed." "The intoxication of thatictory had lasted for a generation," the "sense of power," the "seductive relief that in any contest between good and evil, good always triumphs," the "imperative legacy of virtue." Such assumptions could not possibly survive the assaults of the modern world.

IN explaining the demise of the liberal dream, White alternates uneasily between rueful concessions to reality and bitter assaults on the groups and forces that have spoiled the vision. White concedes, for example, that the crusade for women's rights emerged because of real injustice. And yet there is an unmistakable tone of resentment when he describes the form that crusade assumed. "It meant not to plead but to demand; not to beseech but to mobilize power, by votes, at any point of vulnerability in the male power structure." All sense of balance and restraint, in her words, had been lost. Women were not simply working to remove barriers to advancement. They had become a unified, single-minded special-interest group to whom the common welfare was of secondary importance to their own particular demands. And in winning support for their positions, they were eroding the stable, consensual basis of American life.

Similarly, with the student protests of the late 1960s, a grudging effort to display understanding competes with a far deeper bewilderment and distaste. Describing the violent clashes between demonstrators and police during the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago, White insists that "my sympathies lay here in the street with the youngsters." But only a sentence later, he shows how limited those sym-

pathies actually were: "my reason told me that the police were doing what was required—though with too joyful zest; there could be no other recourse, except to force, to defend convention headquarters and the law itself." The students were, in other words, not simply demonstrators; they were "rioters," determined to stop the political process, bent on a violent invasion of the headquarters hotel, or of the convention hall itself. (Others present in Chicago in 1968, myself among them, will remember the scene somewhat differently.) The "youngsters" were not only challenging the right of the political center to run its own convention; they were challenging its right to run its own war. For "if the Vietnam War was lost, as it was to be, a major defeat had occurred on the streets of Chicago. . . cameras carried the scene around the world to Vietnam, encouraging enemy resistance in that Asian civil war which was to end with the victory of tyranny."

But it was not simply the intemperate demands of strident women, riotous students, or militant blacks that were responsible for the decay of American politics. It was the inability of the nation's leadership to defend itself from those assaults. The Democratic party, "swept by noise and clamor," transformed itself into a new kind of institution—no longer an arena within which contending forces could openly compete, but the "party of quotas," an organization "within which separate groups were legally entitled to special consideration." The federal government itself succumbed to the demands of the "favored groups." Under Jimmy Carter, in particular, certain departments of government "became almost women's rights departments." Commerce, for example, "listed 36 percent of its top appointments as women." Presumably as a result, White explains (quoting an unnamed official in the Commerce Department), "there was no leadership there. She [Juanita Kreps] acted as if she were the hostess of the department, not the leader." In the Defense Department, the trend was still more ominous. The secre-

tary of the army "was chosen to represent blacks, the Secretary of the Navy to represent Hispanics. However large or small the quality of these gentlemen, none had ever heard a shot fired in anger, or seen a man fall bleeding on a battlefield." The deputy under secretary of the navy in the Carter administration was a woman; "so, too, was an Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, a former lawyer and professor who had never flown a plane."

There is an obvious double standard at work here. It is acceptable, apparently, for political tickets to be assembled, for administrations to be staffed—as for decades they have been at all levels of government—so as to reflect the traditional divisions of American politics into religious, ethnic, or regional blocks. That is simply one of the endearing features of the Old Country. And there is, presumably, no reason for alarm when sensitive positions are bestowed upon men with no visible qualifications, as long as they are men of the proper political breeding—as long as they are, for example, Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, each of whom served for a time as assistant secretary of the navy, each of whose prior naval experience consisted of sailing the family sloop in Long Island Sound or off Campobello Island. But the pursuit of racial or sexual balance is another matter. It is to be deplored, because it threatens the fragile unity of the republic.

In a sense, of course, White is correct. Affirmative action is different, both in intent and in effect, from the casual political balancing of the past. It is an admission that the meritocracy does not always work, that for every Theodore White who works his way up from poverty to greatness, there are hundreds more who remain unfairly trapped, without access to advancement unless society makes positive efforts to provide that access. But the admission remains a painful one; and for the fallen-away liberals of the 1950s, affirmative action has become the clearest sign of all of America's betrayal of its own most important values.

THERE IS much more to this book than the bemoaning of vanished dreams. There is, even if in abbreviated form, an account of the 1980 presidential campaign that is lucid, knowledgeable, and at times savagely witty. (White describes Edward Kennedy's fleeting appearance on the podium the final night of the Democratic convention: "He lifted his hand in a seigneurial wave of goodbye, as if he had appeared at the wedding of his chauffeur, and was gone.") There is a remarkably acute analysis of the passing of several of the nation's most powerful political machines. And there is a fine, though sulky, discussion of the revolutionary impact of television on the conduct of national politics. It is difficult to read this book, as it is difficult to read anything White has written, without being seduced by his rare literary grace, his matchless knowledge of the political system, and his constant searching for deeper and deeper meaning in the phenomena he examines.

Yet if the lamentations and resentments are not the whole of this book, or even the majority of it, they cast a pall that is impossible to ignore. One finds no joy here, no sense any longer of the sport and whimsy in political competition, only a mournful, at times querulous, pondering of dark and weighty problems. "I write and close this book in a clouded time," White moans in the portentous tones of an observer of Weimar Germany or *ancien régime* France, "not knowing whether it is twilight or dawn, an era ending or an era beginning. . . . Somewhere, in the years of upheaval, came a wrong turning. Another wrong turning could take politics away from the politicians and bring it to convulsion in the streets."

And so the Making of the President series—which began in 1960 with such fervent hopes and exuberant expectations—ends, like the liberal vision that launched it, in doubt and pessimism. We will have no clearer or more eloquent statement of the slow, painful souring of a generation's golden and, ultimately, unattainable dream. □



Was My Face Red

by Frances Taliaferro

The novel of embarrassment.

A Good Man in Africa, by William Boyd. William Morrow, 342 pages. \$14.50.

AS FAR AS I know, Aristotle had nothing to say about embarrassment. Tragedy is serious, complete, of a certain magnitude, and very Greek, but embarrassment is a crawly little modern feeling. Tragedy is for Oedipus and Medea, but social mortification is for the likes of you and me: we know all too well its horrid surges and aches. Though daily life is crammed with evidence of this ignoble condition, the monuments of world literature are not, for they present human character on a heroic scale. Embarrassment may reduce you and me to a fearful pulp, but it would have meant nothing to Beowulf or Othello, Odysseus or *pious Aeneas*, or their epic audience.

Embarrassment is a hobbledehoy emotion, neither fully childish nor fully adult. No wonder it is experienced most exquisitely by adoles-

Frances Taliaferro teaches at The Brearley School in New York.

cents. In order to be capable of it, one must at least endorse the adult notion that there is a decent or proper way to do things; part of the mortification then stems from the falling short. The worst of the pain is the childishly self-centered conviction that all eyes are on the lapse and this act of gawkinsness will be remembered forever.

My guess is that mortification as a literary experience came into being with the nineteenth-century novel, where social embarrassments are catalogued as fully as transgressions against the divine order. In *Great Expectations*, Pip, newly rich, loftily patronizes his old friends Biddy and Joe, whose souls are good and true but whose manners he finds coarse and common; through several scenes of wounding snobbery the reader cringes, shamed on Pip's behalf. Similarly, in *Emma*, the reader burns with embarrassment for Emma's high-handed schemes to make an ambitious match for her humble friend Harriet. Emma is "handsome, clever and rich"; she should be assuming her proper posi-

tion in the social order, not playing silly games with other people's lives.

There is an interesting tension here between Pip's or Emma's obtuse willfulness and the reader's perception of their silliness and shame. With painful certainty we can anticipate every gaffe, so that our mortification exists long before the character's. What pleasure Dickens and Jane Austen must have taken in exercising this irony and putting us through our paces of shame and indignation.

But Pip and Emma accept the possibility of a moral order. By these dreadful embarrassments, they are eventually chastened and educated to take their place in the community of sensible adults. For in a reasonably harmonious society, embarrassment serves its early purpose of moral education and then withers away with the getting of wisdom, both in the novel and (one hopes) in real life. Some characters prove ineducable: I can hardly bear to read *Madame Bovary*, for instance, so great is the shame I feel on behalf of Emma as she makes her way to foolish self-destruction. Antisocial novels provide a variation on the theme of social mortification. The central character is typically an antihero who will not be educated into any social order because society itself is despicable. Torn between his contempt for its foolishness, hypocrisy, and general dreariness and his practical need to survive, the antihero can barely cope with life's little annoyances; daily he kicks against the pricks. As crises occur, he meets them with expedients that grow ever more rebellious and more baroque self-destructive. Depending on whether he still acknowledges some shred of decorum, the antihero may or may not feel the pangs of mortification; it is the reader who is tormented by the expectation of certain disaster.

IN OUR TIME, the masterpiece of social mortification is Kingsley Amis's first novel, *Lucky Jim*. It was published in 1953, but since then no literary whippersnapper has challenged Amis's power to

render the class struggle in terms of comic disgruntlement and social ineptitude. Although times have changed, Jim's predicament remains transcendently dreadful.

Jim Dixon is a young academic of lower-middle-class background at a provincial university. Trapped in the dismal imperatives of a job that he both loathes and needs, he usually chooses to escape by committing some perversely creative faux pas. The classic scene finds him an overnight guest of his department chairman, who has complete power over Jim's future. When Jim wakes up in the morning, he realizes that in drunken abandon he has burned cigarette holes in the bedding. His preposterous solution is to cut away the burned parts with a razor blade, remake the bed upside down, and hope that when the damage is eventually discovered it will look like dry rot rather than the work of a man.

The bedding episode sets the tone for the rest of the novel, in the course of which Jim will further rend the social fabric and violate every convention of politesse. The reader writhes with embarrassment and fear of discovery, but his sympathy is entirely with Jim, whose antagonists are self-important, artsy, pretentious, hypocritical, manipulative, and self-seeking. Along with Jim, the reader feels the oppression of social imperatives that no sensible person ought to put up with for a minute. "What wouldn't he give for a fierce purging draught of fury or contempt, a really efficient worming from the sense of responsibility?"

Moral education is impossible in *Lucky Jim*, which is essentially a fantasy of schoolboy rebellion whose finest moments are pure anarchy. When Jim flails his features into some sort of correct social response, mentally he is "making a different face and promising himself he'd make it actually when he was next alone." His face is almost like a separate character in the novel; its moments of public civility are refreshed by savage lapses in private. His mandrill face, his crazy-peasant face, and his Edith Sitwell face—all of them strike back at order and re-

sponsibility. But however much we need a comic character to bear the burden of our rebelliousness, however much we egg him on, we know that the forces of polite society are very powerful, and there is bound to be a reckoning. As that time approaches, mortification begins to close in.

In *Lucky Jim*, the occasion is a public lecture on Merrie England, to be delivered by Jim to an audience comprising every important person at the university or in his life; his future depends on his performance. With sickening certainty we know that he will disgrace himself, as indeed he does: his lecture is a mad, drunken debacle, mercifully ended when he passes out on the podium. If this were real life, Jim would spend the rest of his days in a state of lingering dread. Fortunately, it is a comic novel, and he lives happily ever after.

William Boyd's recent first novel, *A Good Man in Africa*, realizes with painful exactness a different kind of social mortification. Morgan Leafy, its main character, is in many



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respects Jim Dixon's spiritual sibling, but Morgan's provincial exile is to the British diplomatic mission in Nkongsamba, Kinjanja. This seedy outpost, which from the air resembles "a giant pool of crapulous vomit on somebody's expansive unmown lawn," is a fair emblem of Morgan's state of mind. Yearning to move upward in a society he despises, he sees his life as a can of worms opened by "a surly and spiteful God"; the only redeeming social value is in beer and sex, sex and beer. If he could manage to marry Priscilla Fanshawe, the boss's daughter, he might acquire more self-respect, "perhaps even a giant leap in social mobility, leaving his tawdry past unrecognised far behind him."

But no. The virtuous Priscilla rebuffs Morgan's passionate advances until the impossible evening when he learns that he has contracted gonorrhea from his Kinjanjan mistress. Priscilla, now ready to fall gaily into bed with Morgan, cannot understand his change of heart and

is severely miffed; she takes up with a junior diplomat whose "unreflecting Oxbridge assurance" is the target of Morgan's most seething misanthropy and class resentment. Meanwhile Morgan's big professional opportunity, an undercover mission in Kinjanjan politics, is rapidly deteriorating, since Morgan has cuckolded Sam Adekunle, the politician he is meant to be winning to the British side.

Sam, now blackmailing Morgan, instructs him to bribe the most up-right man in Nkongsamba, whom Morgan has particular reason to dread. The Duchess of Ripon is about to arrive for an official visit and must not know that only yards away is the putrefying body of a laundress named Innocence, who was struck by lightning. The Kinjanjans will not move the corpse for fear of Shango, the lightning god, and Morgan is in charge of getting rid of it—in between playing Santa Claus at the official Christmas party, dealing with a coup d'état, and lis-

tening to Fanshawe, his boss, say, "Everything must be settled by tomorrow. I'm warning you. Your future depends on it." Morgan's crisis seems to last for days; the drunken debacle of Jim's lecture was tidy by comparison.

MORGAN's natural element is shame: for his unimpressive background, his fatness, his lonely selfishness, "the shabby moral evasions that made up [his] life, all the grey zones of questionable behavior, the whole sad compendium of self-regarding acts." *A Good Man in Africa* plays on the reader's acquaintance with the general shabbiness of life; Morgan is not so anarchically endearing as Jim Dixon, but he touches our sympathy because he is convinced, like many of us, that appearances are useless and all his sordid will eventually be found out. When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes, Jim makes faces; Morgan produces a savage running commentary on his own disintegration.

He knew in his heart that shit creek had claimed him this time ... He couldn't actually recall from his anthology of personal disasters a more traumatic and ruinous evening ... What did it matter to him, really? He was an aristocrat of pain and frustration, a prince of anguish and embarrassment.

In the course of opening Morgan's can of worms, William Boyd has written a very funny novel.

Is there any point in reading about social embarrassment, when that commodity exists so plentifully in ordinary life? *Lucky Jim* and *A Good Man in Africa* represent a minor and undignified art form; one certainly cannot look to them for catharsis, that grand old Aristotelian purging that elevates the soul through the mysteries of pity and fear. They are too funny to be ennobling. Perhaps, however, they are useful because they provide just what Jim Dixon longed for: "a really efficient worming from the sense of responsibility." □

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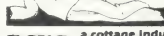
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This space contributed by publisher

Solution to the May Puzzle Notes for "Multiple Choice"

S	T	I	F	F	S	E	L	K	C	I	P
E	N	D	F	A	N	C	Y	F	R	E	E
H	A	L	F	I	N	D	I	A	N	S	
S	T	E	R	F	P	E	I	R	B	E	T
A	S	M	E	A	N	I	N	G	F	U	L
D	E	B	A	R	K	A	S	O	F	T	E
A	T	I	D	E	C	F	A	R	E	R	S
P	O	L	Y	G	A	M	I	S	T	A	T
L	R	H	O	G	S	T	U	R	E	D	L
O	P	E	N	I	N	G	O	G	A	I	N
M	E	A	T	B	A	L	L	S	L	T	E
B	A	I	T	E	R	Y	G	R	E	Y	S

Across: 1. lit-he (STIFF); 5. pickles, two meanings; 10. F-oot(reversal)-loose (FANCY-FREE); 11. Hal-f(irst) (& HALF); 12. cow-boys (& INDIANS); 14. Fr-ets (anagram); 16. brie(f); 17. meaningful, anagram; 19. em (reversal)-bark (DEBARK); 21. duo-L, reversed (SOFT); 23. time, reversal (& TIDE); 24. far(m)ers; 26. mo(no-G-am-l)st (POLYGAMIST); 27. hogs, go, reversed, in H.S.; 30. red-lo, reversed; 32. c-losing (OPENING); 33. lo(wer cla)ss (GAIN); 34. spaghetti, anagram (& MEATBALLS); 35. a-(Saul)St. (& BATTERY); 36. greys, homonym. **Down:** 1. D.A.(she)'s; 2. Protestant, anagram; 3. bus-y (IDLE); 4. fan-fare; 5. snip, reversal; 6. f(A-l)ence; 7. idyl, homonym; 8. crab, two meanings; 9. mortal, two meanings (& PESTLE); 13. partiality, anagram of "a trial" in "pity" (NEUTRALITY); 15. ro (reversal)-ugh (& READY) 18. gorse, hidden; 20. ran-sack; 21. G-lorias (anagram); 22. aplomb, homonym; 25. S-ticks (& STONES); 27. c(o/l)d (HEAT); 28. gibe, anagram; 29. (prose)cute (UGLY); 31. (c)hill (& DALE).

PUZZLE

Code 13

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

This month's instructions:

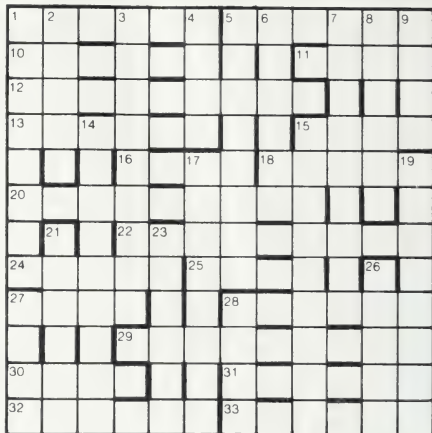
A simple substitution code has been arrived at by choosing a thirteen-letter word in which no letter recurs, then arranging the remaining thirteen letters of the alphabet below it. For instance: L U M B E R J A C K I N G

D F H O P Q S T V W X Y Z

Using this code, the word **TIMBER** would be encoded as **AXHOPO**. Answers to the clues in *italics* are to be entered in the diagram in code. Solvers are to identify the thirteen-letter word used.

Answers include three proper nouns. As always, mental re-punctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 79.



CLUES

ACROSS

1. *A crab's mistaken for a large beetle* (6)
5. *Brand name that's marginal in Martinique* (6)
10. Hunting birds and carp (6)
11. Very large pigeon (4)
12. Vocal range regresses as one regular practice is specified (9)
13. Pieces of music I dropped from luggage (6)
15. Love of gold is French distinction (4)
16. Arbitrators head off questions persistently (4)
18. Dub in changes without being asked (5)
20. Most cold and unhealthy, one gotten in chest (9)
22. What monks practice would be absolute sovereignty if king participates (9)
24. Was an ape mean, embracing me (5)
25. Priest is correct... (4)
27. ...pare church laws without much delay (4)
28. Neck is twisted in disgust (6)
29. Formed hoax and hit the road (9)
30. What comes after I feel sick and pokey (4)
31. Iron back and forth on edges of coat—this is result (6)
32. *To injure man, go away first* (6)
33. *Black scoundrel's shirt* (6)

DOWN

1. *Waste chopped asunder without question* (8)
2. 500 plus 500 sheets... ideal (5)
3. Islamics said to be involved in weighty affairs? (9)
4. Soaks hollow weights (4)
5. Don't start bride's outfit for French painter (8)
6. Against victory based on intricate ruses (6)
7. Loafer at Fort Knox? (9)
8. Shape like a doughnut or do it differently (6)
9. *Test leader of military chopper that's overturned* (4)
14. Movie title almost misrepresented musical figure (9)
15. Taking credit—definitely not extemporaneously? (2, 3, 4)
17. Certain spectacles showing king leaving prince with Buddhist sect uprising (5-3)
19. *Dog left one hint: pigtail* (8)
21. Fabulous sailor is raising band at sea (6)
23. Terrible musical if Brooks takes lead (6)
26. Church supports shelter for hanger-on (5)
27. *Six public school bigwigs* (4)
28. Confusion in this diagram is exactly opposite, exactly opposite (4)

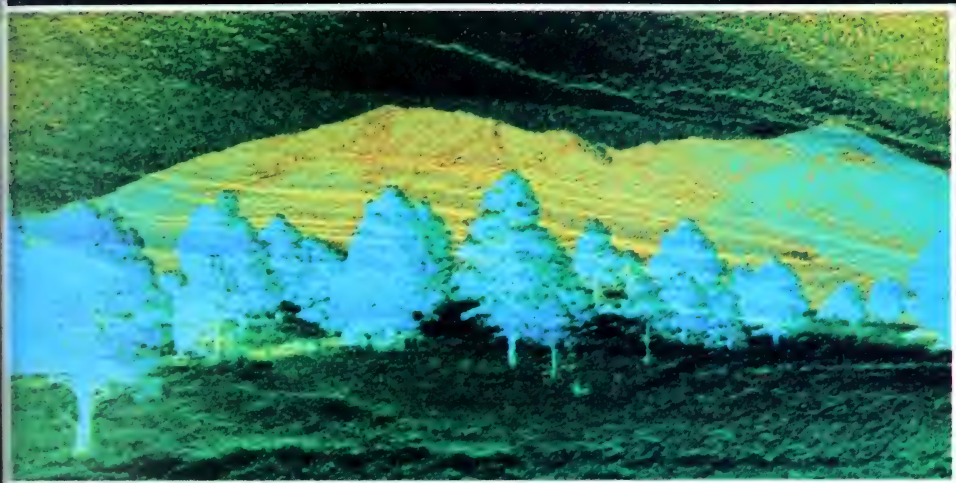
CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Code 13, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by June 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive a one-year

subscription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the July issue. Winners' names will be printed in the August issue. Winners of the April puzzle, "Crazy Quilt," are Paul Alexander, Rockville, Maryland; Barbara Kreuter, Princeton, New Jersey; and Nancy K. Lawlor, Lewes, Delaware.

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